Saturday Review

April 19, 1975

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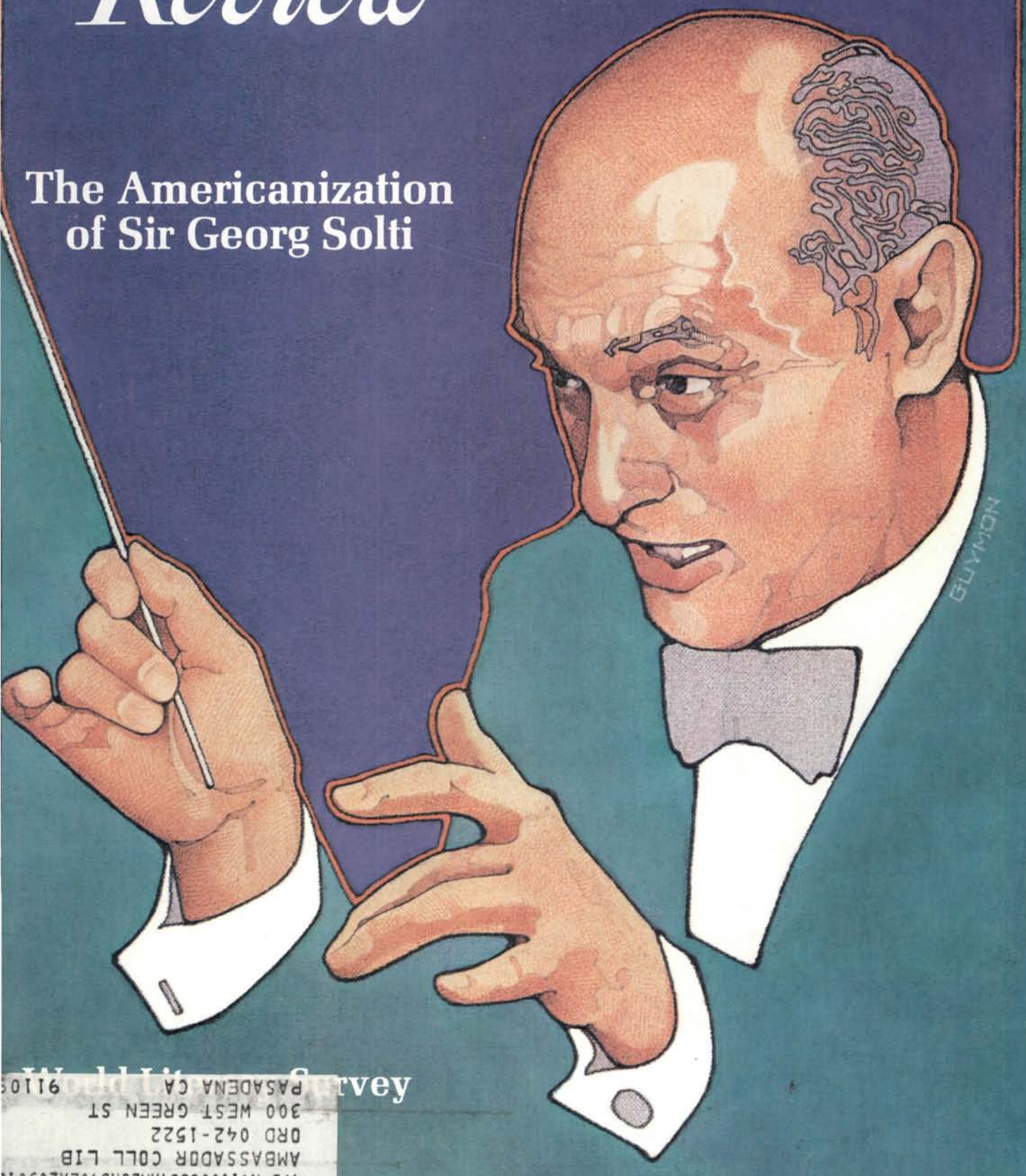

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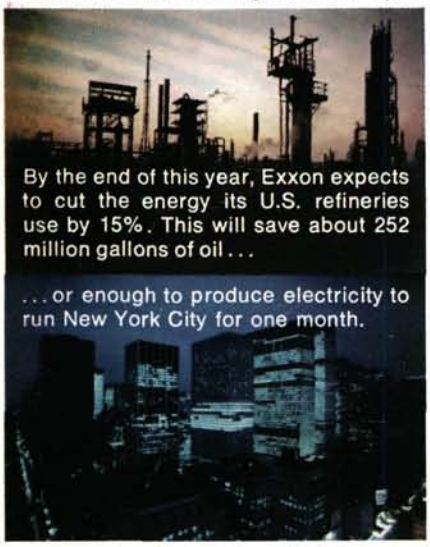
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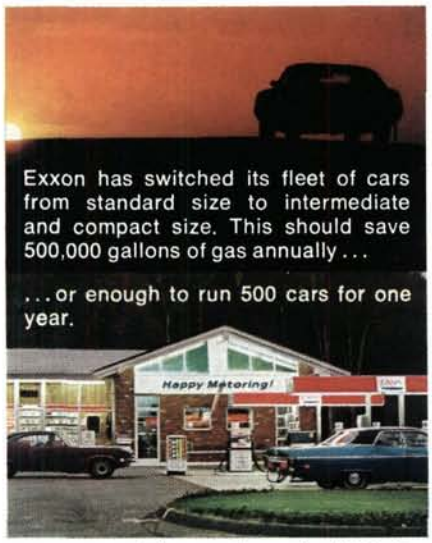
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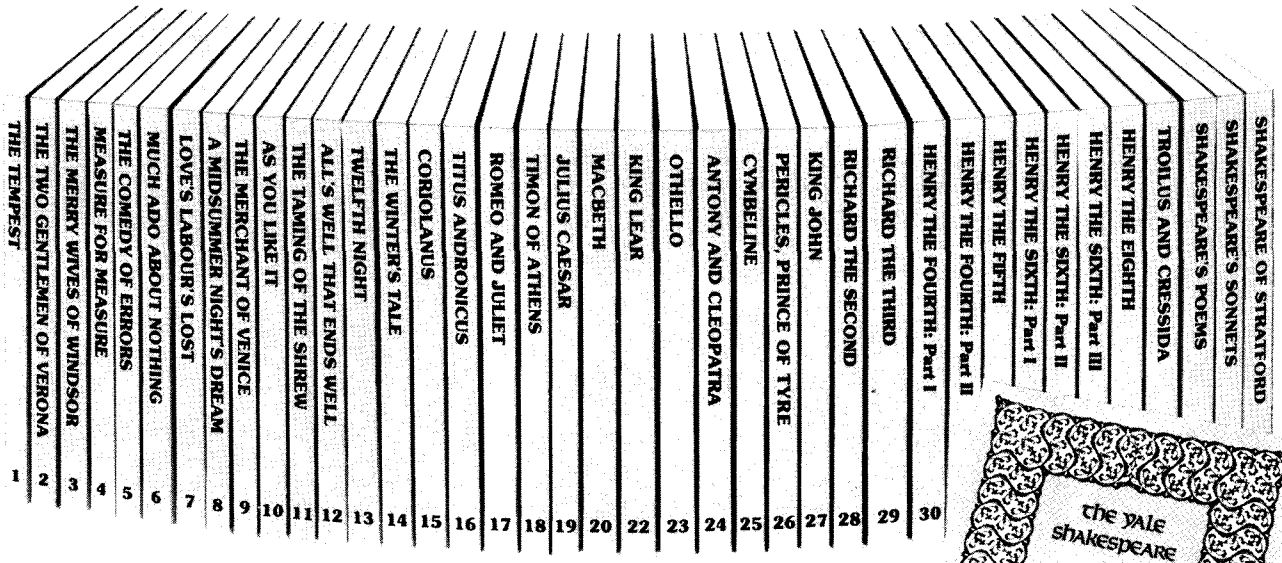

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Cambodia's Cry for Help

In January 1961, during the civil war in Laos, I came across a young mother, a baby in her arms, sitting in the middle of a roadway not far from the center of Vientiane. The woman was dazed and seemed oblivious of the cars on both sides as they swerved to avoid her. We helped her to her feet and led her off the road. She sank to the sidewalk, still half-conscious and disconnected from her surroundings.

In the hospital later, we learned that her husband and two children had been killed three days earlier when the war swept through her village, some 40 miles from the capital. The mother had taken her baby and joined the human tide of refugees fleeing the war zone. She didn't remember whether she had had any food but knew that she had nursed her baby.

There were thousands of war victims in Laos that winter. It was not a simple war. Most people didn't know what the war was about or which side they were supposed to be on. The opposing forces both wore American uniforms, used American guns, American ammunition. Soldiers wore different-colored armbands to identify themselves, often changing armbands depending on where they were. It was a battlefield of the absurd.

The immediate background of the civil war was that Laos had very recently become a constitutional government, holding the first elections in its history. The first Prime Minister was Souvanna Phouma, a political neutralist who wanted to keep his country free of Chinese domination. The United States helped to supply and to underwrite the Laos army, even paying the salaries of its soldiers and officers.

Enter Phoumi Nosavan, son-in-law of the Prime Minister of Thailand, where the United States operated its main military base in Indochina. The United States allowed itself to be persuaded that it should install Phoumi Nosavan at the head of the Laos government. There was, of course, the little matter of Souvanna and the new constitutional government. But all doubts were readily swept aside by the assurances that the coup would be swift and painless.

It was a ghastly miscalculation. The coup failed and triggered a civil war. U.S. undercover operatives were behind Phoumi Nosavan, but our State Department officially recognized Souvanna. The United States found itself in the bizarre situation of paying the wages of opposing armies and providing both sides with uniforms, weapons, and ammunition. Compounding our problem was the fact that the civil war resulted in the increased strength of the Communist Pathet Lao, which was able to exploit the feelings of outrage of many people over the coup.

Eventually, Souvanna was restored to his office with the support of the United States, but the miscalculation left a legacy of thousands dead, with thousands more wounded and homeless. Ironically, the miscalculation also helped to make heroes out of the very Communists we loudly proclaimed we were trying to destroy.

How did we get involved in such sordid business? The principle of self-determination had always been a basic principle in U.S. foreign policy. It was a principle we professed to uphold when we first went into Indochina. But, as with Watergate, the attempt to cover up initial mistakes led to bigger ones until collapse became inevitable. It was a mistake for us to make major decisions in order to curry favor with the government of Thailand. And it was a bigger mistake to try to ram Phoumi Nosavan down the throats of the Laotian people. Both mistakes put the United States in the business of underwriting a civil war. People were killed. They were not killed by abstractions. Their deaths were the result of a coup in which the United States was an active partner.

If it is a crime to break into a psychiatrist's office or into the headquarters of a political party, why is it not a crime to break into a country? There are penalties, properly so, for interfering with the privacy of an individual by tapping his telephone. Why are there no penalties for depriving an individual of his government or his village or his home or his right to live? Why is it wrong for the CIA to take away the rights of Americans but perfectly legal for that agency to take away the rights of people outside the United States? "Legal" according to what definition?

In the cold, half-lit world of foreign-policy makers, where morality is regarded as the drivel of unsophisticated minds, and where nothing is easier than to rationalize mistakes, the death or suffering of individual human beings doesn't count for much. Yet the only hope for civilization is that the cause of a single individual will be regarded as the most important cause on earth.

THESE REFLECTIONS on Laos are prompted by the current news from Cambodia and Vietnam. Homeless people are swarming out of the war zones. And Americans are experiencing great frustration in deciding whether to come to their aid. The decision-making process may be simplified, however, if we consult history. U.S. policy in Cambodia came off the same spool as the policy toward

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Letters From Readers

An Improved Posture

For many years I have admired the editorial excellence of *Saturday Review*. However, a recent article by Robert Masters ("The Psychophysical Experience," February 22) has sharply altered this view. . . .

It is apparent that Masters has grasped at a number of half-truths and generalizations and has attempted to validate them by the use of pseudo-scientific jargon, which elevates the irrational to new heights.

Masters opens his article with the following statement: "In the present 'normal' course of human development, even by the end of the third year of life, coordination has become impaired in most persons." It is true that the foundation for postural alignment in a standing position is laid early in life, but it is absurd to make the statement that coordination is impaired in most persons by the age of three. Coordination for what? Eye-hand movement? Walking, crawling, jumping, climbing? There is no such thing as general motor coordination—coordination is specific to the task. In addition, posture can be modified by a number of factors, such as heredity, nutrition, pathology, injury, emotion, and so on. Expecting everyone to meet any given set of standards is to ignore the fact that posture is very largely an individual matter. Masters's concept implies that posture is a condition which fulfills certain esthetic and mechanical specifications—for example, the line of gravity. These kinds of standards are arbitrary, to say the least. The best posture for each person is that in which the bony segments are balanced in the position of least strain and maximum support. . . .

George McGlynn, Chairman
Dept. of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation
University of San Francisco
San Francisco, Calif.

Laos and Vietnam. We helped to oust the Cambodian government of Prince Sihanouk in 1970, just as we helped to unseat Souvanna Phouma in Laos and at least three governments in South Vietnam. Sihanouk was not pro-American, but neither was he Communist. The effect of the ouster, however, was to make Sihanouk dependent on Peking. The civil war today in Cambodia, with its human tragedies, cannot be separated from its beginnings.

The one question we didn't think to ask about the coups in Cambodia and Laos was whether the will of the people was important. In the world of *realpolitik*, a question such as this is all too easily put aside as extraneous or unsophisticated. But the question must be asked nevertheless. The question will certainly not be answered by calling urgently for additional military help at a time of breakdown and crisis.

Nothing is more insulting to the American intelligence than to be told, in the wake of Vietnam, that if we can just increase military aid to Cambodia all can be saved. When President Ford calls for additional military aid, does he have a ceiling in mind? If hardware and bombs are not enough, will we be expected to send men? How many? Fifty thousand? One hundred thousand? Five hundred thousand?

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE are being told by their government that the rest of the world is watching us for signs of weakness in our policy on Cambodia. How do we avoid "weakness"? By putting on a show of bravado? Does avoiding "weakness" mean we must use force whenever we are taunted to prove we are the most powerful nation in the world?

What is happening in Cambodia today shows that we have yet to learn the essential lesson of the Vietnam war: that moral factors are powerful forces in history, perhaps the most powerful of all. We become strong in direct proportion to our ability to give full weight to moral issues in the making of foreign policy. Government policy-makers too often feel they demonstrate their credentials, not by taking moral factors into account, but by their readiness to go to the brink in pursuit of a world balance of power. But all such attitudes and approaches are part of yesterday's world; they have nothing to give to life or to the future of this nation. If President Ford wants to enhance American prestige in the world, he would do better to look to Madison and Franklin than to Machiavelli and Bismarck.

N.C.

Environment Newsletter

Readers who wish to receive regular reports on world environmental developments are invited to write to the editor of the World Environment Newsletter: Mr. Philip Quigg, Thornton Drive, Northport, N.Y. 11768. Although *SR* has been obliged, for space reasons, to discontinue regular publication of the newsletter, the editors will continue their long-standing coverage of major environmental questions in the articles pages.

Dissenting Descendant

K. Jason Sitewell, in his review of *Illegal Separation*, by A. A. Scanlon ("Separate But Illegal," April 5), refers to Philip Maybeck's negligence at the negotiations attending the separation of the American colonies from Great Britain. Apparently, Mr. Sitewell is unaware of the special study by J. Richard Hearn that appeared in 1844 under the title *The Maybeck Errata*. Professor Hearn examines the evidence, purporting to show deliberate intent by Maybeck to sabotage the articles of separation. His conclusion is that the imperfections or illegalities connected to Maybeck are indeed responsible for the fact that the separation document is invalid, but he attributes these errors not to collusion between Maybeck and the British, but to Maybeck's sheer stupidity.

As a direct descendant of Philip Maybeck, I feel it necessary to bring these facts to light.

Margretta Maybeck
Boston, Mass.

Faulty Image

I want to correct several untruths Herbert Gold wrote about me in his essay ("Why 'I'?" February 8).

In the Sixties I wrote a total of four articles for the *Village Voice*. That hardly qualifies me as part of the "mob of Village Voice superstars."

Gold writes, "Dotson Rader retails his experience as a male hustler. . . ." I have never been a male prostitute, as Mr. Gold seems to believe. His confusion . . . probably comes from the fact

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that I published a novel, *Government Inspected Meat and Other Fun Summer Things,* which is about the life of a male hustler. And in my book *Blood Dues* I use the metaphor of the hustler to represent part of my generation, and also to express feelings of exploitation and sorrow I knew when I first arrived in New York at 18, alone. . . . Finally, my hair is not thinning, thank you.

Dotson Rader
New York, N.Y.

Ballet Boosted

Hurray for the marvelous ballet cover on the March 8 issue of *Saturday Review*. In view of the ever-increasing interest in the subject, I applaud the prominence you are giving it as well as the informative and interesting coverage by Walter Terry [see page 50]. As the president of a relatively new company, the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, I knew ballet was here to stay when Walter Terry's reviews began to appear in your magazine. I remember sending copies to our board to reassure them we were working for the right cause.

Mrs. Leon Falk, President
Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre
Pittsburgh, Pa.

To Eliminate Poverty

I must express my vast appreciation of Norman Cousins's editorial ("Of Life and Lifeboats," March 8). The fearsome idea of "triage" has been very much a part of current discussions of world problems and solutions. We, of Western civilizations, must stop worshiping the cult of science and technology and its high priests, the technologists, with their lopsided education and values. Technologists must be prevented from making our moral and philosophical decisions for us. . . .

If our planet is to survive in better shape than its current one, it might be a good idea to educate more of our young to be philosophers and thinkers, so that they can help us "doers and actors" head in the right direction. We need to learn how to use our technology to favor all people, rather than just the lucky 25 percent. Science will have to start to take its cue from the "dreamers" and be sensitive to contemporary moral issues rather than racing ahead with what it feels like doing, and the world be damned. . . .

Margery Rubin
Westbury, N.Y.

I share Norman Cousins's concern for starving Indians. However, we will never buy them out of poverty by sending them "shipments of fertilizers, chemicals, plows, . . . engines, dynamos, and thousands of other items" from the affluent supermarket called America. This technological fare increases production but puts poor people out of work, increasing the distance between the poor and the rich in India.

What the "developed" nations must share is not the trappings, but knowledge and skill at solving problems. Sharing knowledge is more difficult than sending goods, of course. One must establish communication—not with the well-to-do, but with those who need the knowledge. And once the knowledge is gained, the poor man can use it to better himself beyond one season's application of fertilizer. . . . And the knowledge allows him to become liberated from a need for more shipments of fertilizer and repair parts for tractors and stops the shameful perpetuation of the gulf between rich and poor.

Edward Landin
St. Paul, Minn.

The Hardin approach is quite valid actually in its restricted application, but Norman Cousins pointed out correctly that the way to birth control is through affluence and education, rather than through poverty and ignorance. . . .

Nevertheless, I would like to add that mankind should not be restricted to the Schweitzer-like "reverence for life" approach either.

The limitations of this small planet should bring us all around eventually to the thesis that the *quality* of life is more important and better insurance for the continuation of the species than mere *quantity* of life. . . .

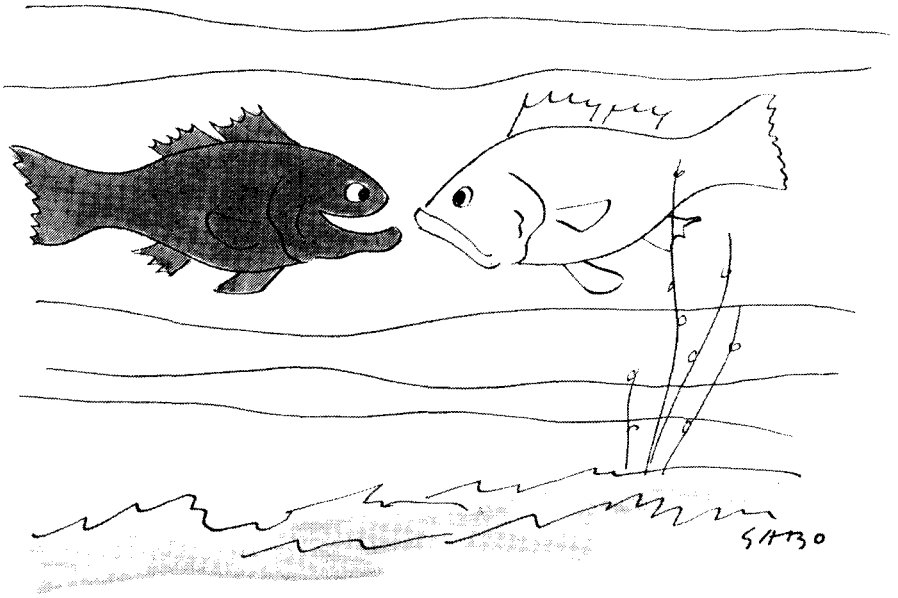
Carl Wickum
Maple Shade, N.J.

. . . Garrett Hardin is neither immoral, amoral, nor desensitized. He is among the few who are trying to find an ethically based answer to "What is our obligation to posterity?" The obverse side of his thesis, which almost everyone conveniently ignores, is that *we* do not have the only lifeboat, and that it is "share and share alike" within each boat. Hardinism would cause Baker and N.C. to eat less well, and Harlem, Detroit, and Appalachia better—a consequence I am prepared to accept. I'm sad and deeply disturbed—all the "help my neighbor" principles of a farm-raised Hoosier don't apply—but Garrett has convinced me that he is basically correct. I'm giving away as much of my modest income as ever, but my list is being revised. This is not because I have a right to decide who lives or dies, but because I have an obligation to support what I believe will at least slow *homo sapiens* on its road to extinction. . . .

E. G. Stanley Baker
Madison, N.J.

Align me with Prof. Garrett Hardin if you wish—but I must protest the foolish notion that it is the holy mission of the United States to feed the whole world! For more years than I care to

(Continued on page 59.)



"Don't you remember me? We were in the same school, off south Boston!"

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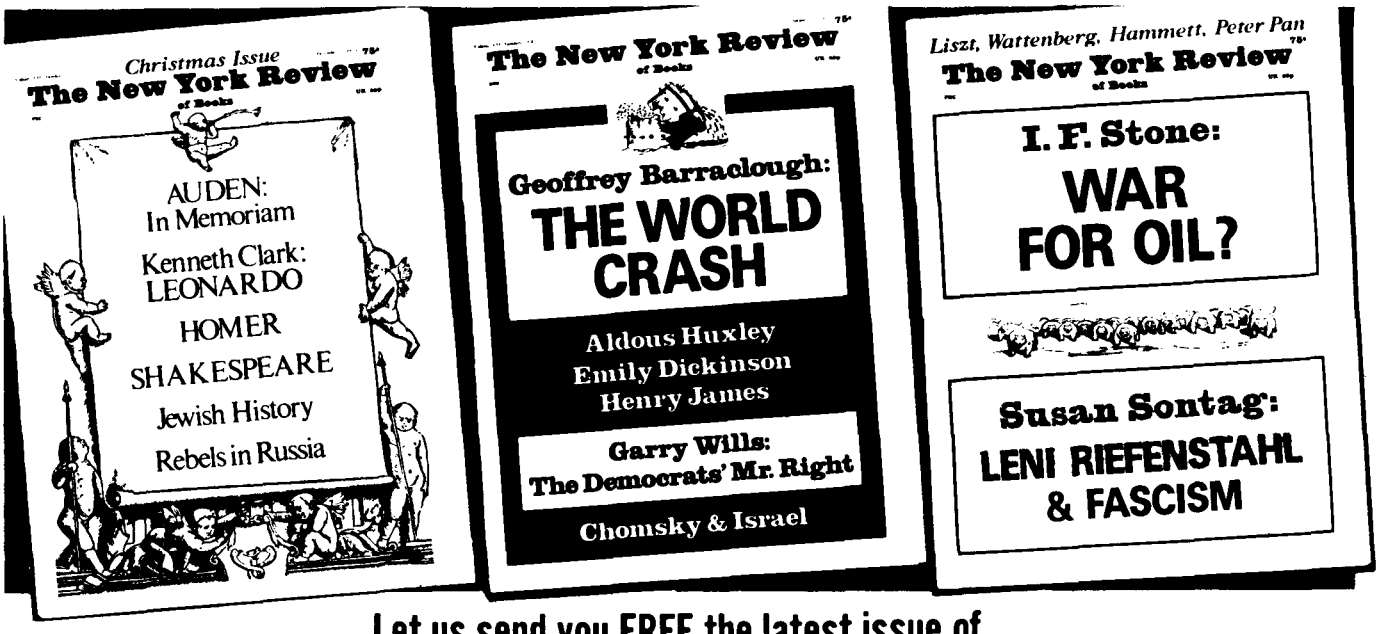

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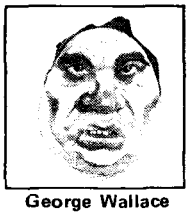
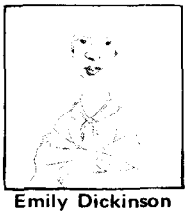


George Wallace

"Make way for the leading contender!" George Wallace announced recently. Garry Wills analyzes the dilemmas of the Democratic politicians and why they are now flocking around Wallace—in spite of all we hear about the "new" Democratic party. "American politics," he writes, "are the South's revenge for the Civil War."

Are we heading into a world economic crash likely to be even more severe than that of 1929? Distinguished historian Geoffrey Barraclough, whose *New York Review* article on The Coming Depression aroused so much discussion last year, sees the twin issues of food and energy as dangerously misunderstood because their history is ignored. Unlike other doomsayers, however, he suggests how the world's resources can support a population many times larger than now and outlines the changes needed if a crash is to be avoided.

The drawings are by noted artist David Levine, whose literary caricatures are a feature of The New York Review.



Emily Dickinson

"Emily Dickinson was a reticent woman with a habit of passionate attachment to married men," writes Irwin Ehrenpreis. In his moving review of the new two volume *Life of Emily Dickinson*, he examines the paradox of this most sheltered and withdrawn of women whose poetry is marked "by constant acquaintance with the most profound experience."

Sigmund Freud

Is anatomy destiny? Christopher Lasch reviews three new books on psychoanalysis and women and not only discusses the "revisionist" attacks on Freud, but tells us what Freud actually said about women, his psychoanalytic theory of womanhood, and, in doing so, recaptures for us the continuing power of his work.

Every two weeks *The New York Review of Books* publishes criticism by writers and scholars who are themselves a major force in world literature and thought—Mary McCarthy, Erik Erikson, Elizabeth Hardwick, Robert Coles, Garry Wills, Alfred Kazin, Carlos Fuentes, Hannah Arendt, and Lewis Mumford. "*Reading The New York Review,*" one professor writes, "*is my idea of what going to a brilliant, small university should be.*"

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Julian Huxley: A Tribute

by Peter Medawar

Julian Huxley, who died February 21, 1975, was the leading experimental biologist of his day at a time when the ever more detailed validation of the concept of evolution was still thought of as the principal task of biology. The supplanting of comparative anatomy by what everybody came to call "experimental biology" is a fascinating episode in the history of ideas. In the early days of the Darwinian revolution, the elucidation of homologies and the working out of family trees had the same kind of appeal and confident self-importance that molecular biology has today. I know from personal conversations with Julian Huxley that E. S. Goodrich, the former Linacre Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy at Oxford and the only British comparative anatomist of the same stature as the German Gegenbaur and the Dutch van Wijhe, still regarded himself even quite late in life as a torchbearer and an adventurous pioneer of the great new doctrine.

But, alas, comparative anatomy became an abuse and an impediment to progress, just as comparative physiology was to become in the next quarter-century and as molecular biology will surely become in 10 or 20 years (for I foresee clearly a time when, regardless of what major problems in biology remain to be attended to, the sequencing of a protein will still be regarded as an intrinsically meritorious activity that will be taken to represent the courageous holding aloft of the banner of what was once a great revolution in biological ideas).

Because of his intellectual vitality and the great compass of his interest and understanding, Huxley rightly earned for himself the position of acknowledged leader of the newer biology. Certainly no one since has made contributions of comparable magnitude to fields so diverse as:

(1) ethology (his papers on the courtship behavior of the great crested grebe are acknowledged classics);

(2) physiological genetics;

(3) developmental physiology, including the study of allometry, or differential growth; and

(4) ecology, especially in relation to speciation.

And then again, Huxley was, as his grandfather had been, a great expositor of the notion of evolution, although sometimes his ideas on the subject were felt by his juniors—rightly or wrongly—to be wrongheaded—mainly because Huxley had never really mastered the modern population-dynamical approach to evolution theory; and so great was Huxley's enthusiasm for the idea of evolution that he came in his later years to treat evolutionism as a sort of secular religion.

Huxley was a great tutor in the old Oxford style—that is, a man who, because he loved it, chose to teach the *whole* of his subject instead of teaching only the parts of it that interested him and, for the remainder, farming out his students to specialists in other fields. The influence of a really good tutor lasts through many generations of pupils and pupils' pupils, and so on. It is pleasing therefore to reflect that through a lineage that can be worked out with names and dates in detail, Julian's son Francis was his own great grand-pupil. (The lineage is Julian Huxley—Gavin de Beer—J. Z. Young—P. B. Medawar—Francis Huxley.)

In view of these qualities of character, it is not at all surprising that Huxley was kind and helpful to the young, for although people in his position are bombarded from all quarters of the earth by manuscripts of which the authors profess to seek their recipient's candid opinion, Huxley bore with this kind of imposition very handsomely and often made the time to answer his correspondents at length—sometimes in his own handwriting.

I do not know and cannot imagine any scale of evaluation of scientific merit along which Huxley would not stand out as one of the foremost biologists of the twentieth century. □

Peter Medawar is an eminent British scientist and a Nobel Prize-winner. The above article first appeared in Nature.

Editor's Note: *The following poem is believed to be the last of Julian Huxley's writings. The poem is reprinted courtesy of the* New Statesman, *London.*

Beethoven's Missa Solemnis in Ely Cathedral

by Julian Huxley

Out of the mouths of little boys in
  Eton jackets,
And of handsome young men and the
  lovely singer
The music swells, choir and singers
  united in difference,
The singing invades the nave, joins the
  organ, soars aloft,
It sweeps the clerestory, then rises
To where the wings of stone centre on
  their sculptured groining,
To fill the whole cathedral.

The boys renew their treble, while
  the men
Back the vibrations with their deeper
  tones.

The music comes alive, filling the
  man-made temple.
It sings of God and Man, and through
  the singing
We glimpse the angel statues and the
  strange grotesques.

The holy music presses against the
  painted windows
Radiant with legends;
While the majestic language of song
  expands
Through the reverberations of space.

The ship of God stands on its little hill
Transmitting the music's beauty
Across the watery fens.
Escaping from its noble prison the
  singing falls
On courtyards green with lawn and
  bright with flowers.

The choir shouts its joy
Across the sunlit levels;
But I remain inside, silent,
Cocooned in sounding beauty,
  enveloped by the chant.

The boys sing on . . .

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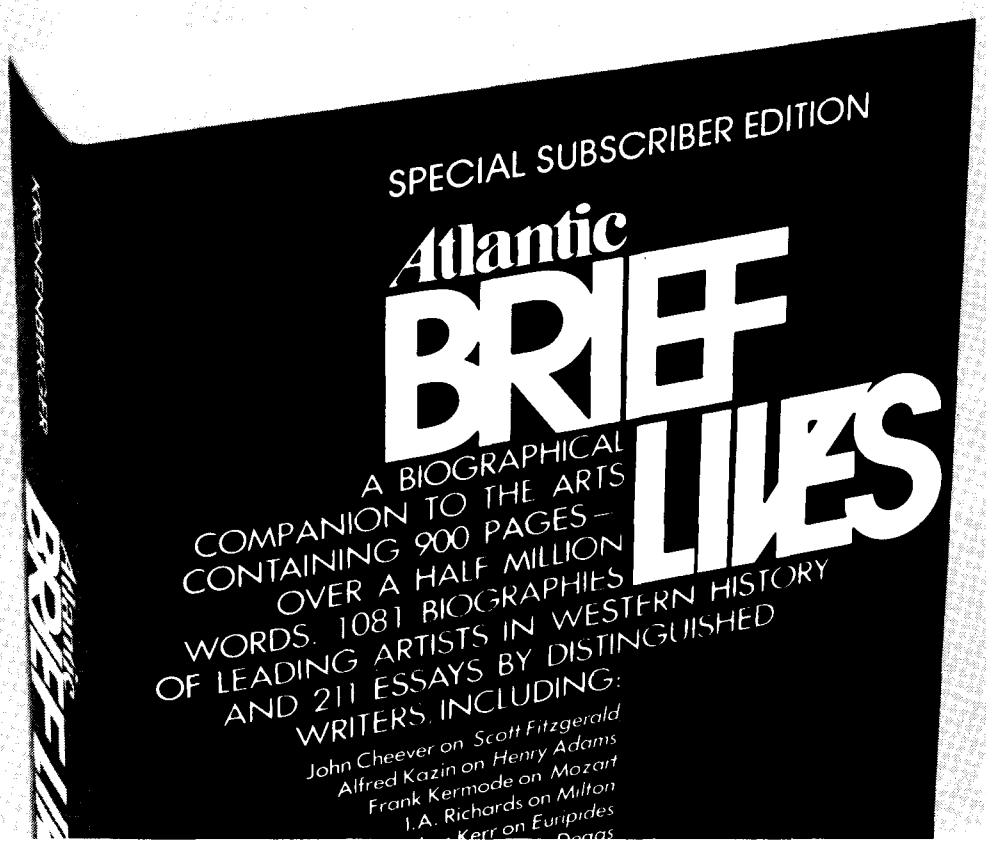
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THE Atlantic MONTHLY

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World Progress Report

Sweet News

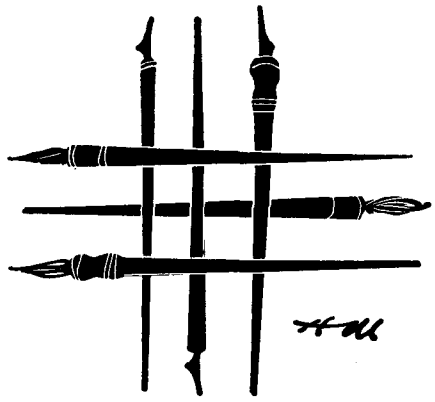
After years of difficulty in diversifying its single-crop economy from a risky reliance on sugar cane, Cuba is savoring its share of the sweet life afforded by the recent fourfold increase in the world sugar price. Now, in addition, with the assistance of the U.N. Development Programme and other international development-aid agencies, the Cuban government is plowing some of the windfall profits from the sugar into cashing in on the cane as well.

The focus of a new, $30 million research and development effort is an $11.3 million pilot plant, which will turn bagasse—the fibrous cane material that remains after the sugar has been extracted—into newsprint. The Cuban Institute for Sugar Cane By-Product Research is also investigating the potential for using bagasse as a raw material for the production of acetate, activated carbon, furfural (a distilled oil used in the manufacture of plastics), and other salable commodities. Currently, although some bagasse is used in industrial processes elsewhere in the world, most of Cuba's 7-million-metric-ton annual production is simply burned at the sugar mills as waste.

Cuba's decision to challenge the economic and technical difficulties of making bagasse-based newsprint promises strategic benefits to other developing countries—among them Mexico, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Pakistan—afflicted with a surplus of home-grown bagasse and a shortage of native newsprint. The high cost of imported paper reduces even the leading national journals in some developing countries to a few thin pages per day—hardly enough to satisfy the public's need to know.

At the same time, importing expensive newsprint drains poor economies. In North America, where abundant woodpulp resources moderate the price of paper, the cost of newsprint recently rose from $200 a ton to $250 and more; at the same time the price in Indonesia reached more than $600 a ton and as much as $700 in Afghanistan.

If the Cuban experiment succeeds, the UNDP plans to export the new technology to other countries, where it will decrease the deficits of information and foreign exchange while it creates jobs for local workers. Cuba's schedule calls for the pilot plant to be ready by next year and the full-scale production of bagasse newsprint by 1980.



Delayed Action

In 1925, in the aftermath of World War I, the United States initiated an international agreement—the Geneva Protocol—banning the first use, by any signatory nation, of the gases or bacteriological weapons that horrified the conscience of the war-weary world. By 1975, fully half a century after the protocol was proposed, 105 nations had ratified the agreement. It was not until last January, however, that the United States, the original author, became the one hundred sixth nation to ratify.

The unsigned arms-limitation agreement had remained a quiet national scandal ever since the Senate, under pressure from the chemical industry and others, failed to ratify it in 1926. Meanwhile, the development and stockpiling of various chemical weapons continued. Finally, the Geneva Protocol was resubmitted to the Senate in 1970, but only with the administration's strict stipulation that its terms not include the herbicides and euphemistically named riot gases that were featured in the United States' Vietnam arsenal. Action on the treaty was frozen when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would not accede to these caveats.

Caught in the same impasse was another, more recent treaty, which is limited to biological and toxic weapons but extends beyond the Geneva Protocol, which merely forbids "use." The biological-weapons treaty prohibits their development, production, or possession. It had been negotiated as the capstone of a series of initiatives by the Nixon administration, in response to world opinion, that included the renunciation of all biological weapons in 1969 and the destruction of U.S. inventories of such substances two years later.

In order to revive the stalled Biological Weapons Convention of 1972, President Ford in 1974 reached a compromise with the Senate committee on the Geneva Protocol: The exclusion of "riot gases" and herbicides from its terms would stand, but the President would "renounce as a matter of national policy" their use except in limited and specified circumstances. The full Senate was satisfied, and the President signed the instruments of ratification for both the 1925 and 1972 treaties last January.

Last March, as provided in the Biological Weapons Convention, a committee began meeting in Geneva to consider further treaty arrangements that would bring about total chemical disarmament, including the nerve gases, defoliants, and other exotic concoctions that fall into the limbo between the two ratified treaties. That conference will have to deal with the continued insistence by the United States that the ingredients of its antipersonnel "riot control" agents and defoliant sprays do not come under the definition of "chemicals."

Meanwhile, the U.S. Army is inexorably hurrying ahead with the development of so-called binary weapons, which further complicate the question of definition. The binaries employ two gases, innocuous in themselves, which can be produced, stockpiled, and transported in perfect innocence, and immediately before use, combined to make a potent nerve gas.

ANTHONY WOLFF

WIT TWISTER NO. 44

Edited by Arthur Swan

The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each dash within a blank corresponds to a letter of the word. Answers on page 58.

The castle stood __ __ __ __
__ __ among tall peaks.
The __ __ __ __ __ __ of the
queen remained in doubt
Till, painting with __ __ __ __
__ __ her glowing cheeks,
She counterfeited death and was
borne out.

A. S.

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Curmudgeon-at-Large by Cleveland Amory

You may have seen, a while back, that a fellow sued the army because they wanted him to go to Germany. Not to go to *war* in Germany, mind you. To go to the *peacetime* army in Germany. But the fellow, you see, had a clause in his contract . . .

No, we're not kidding. In case you haven't realized it, this new peacetime draftless army is something new in armies. Among other things, today's army volunteer is offered 100 careers—not in-army careers, but after-army careers—and no fewer than 800 "affiliated" colleges now offer him—or her—courses, of which the army picks up as much as 75 percent of the tuition. And he or she studies, of course, on army time.

Even basic training isn't—well, basic. If you're not—and we quote—"suited for a uniform," what you do is leave. And you don't just take *a* leave—you leave for good. Furthermore, you get an honorable discharge. After you're over the rigors of this basic training, you will receive—now get this—"semi-private" accommodations, "opportunities for travel," "choice of specialty," "choice of working location," plus—and this is the crucial part—"bonuses for hazardous duty."

Once upon a time, you will recall, Irving Berlin wrote:

This is the Army, Mr. Jones,
No private rooms or telephones,
You've had your breakfast in bed before—
But you won't have it there anymore.

It's time, it appears, for a new army anthem. We suggest:

This is the Army, Mr. Jones,
Semi-private rooms and telephones,
You've had your breakfast in bed before—
And you'll have it still—in peace or war.

The latter, however, brings up an unpleasant possibility. One officer complained about the New Army. "We have quartermasters," he said, "to send the men their equipment, signal men to tell them it's coming, and engineers to make their camp." Then the officer sighed. "The only thing we don't have," he said, "is combat soldiers."

You know the type—probably one of those old fuddy-duddy, regular-army, spit-and-polish Colonel Blimps.

HEADLINE OF THE MONTH—as found by Mrs. Macin Estill, in the Holmes County (Pa.) *Farmer-Hub*:

CONVERSATIONALIST TRAINED
IN FIRST AID TECHNIQUES

Listeners these days can be tough.

WASHINGTON REPORT—as located by Mike Hogye in the Richmond *Times Dispatch*:

Meany assailed Arthur F. Burns, chairman of the Federal Reserve Hoard as a "national disaster."

At least *somebody* knew there'd come a rainy day.

LONDON WIRE—as pulled by Marion Schaefer, of Pine Plains, N.Y., from *Dog World*:

Among the members returned to Parliament in the last British election was Clement Freud, grandson of Sigmund Freud, who is noted for his highbrow television commercials for dog food.

From nuts to mutts in three generations.

CELEBRITY BEAT—as pounded by Jeffrey Blair, of Millbrae, Calif., in the San Francisco *Chronicle*:

Officials of Denver General Hospital say singer Pearl Bailey has returned to her home in Northridge, Calif.

Miss Bailey was hospitalized here two days for exhaustion and reaction to the city's attitude.

And who was it said New York is a city of critics?

INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH—as viewed by Valerie Sherlock from Lynn Ashby's column in the Houston *Post*:

A mercifully unnamed Houston policeman, being interviewed by a TV newsman on whether he would trust women police officers in patrol cars: "Well, I guess we'll just have to feel them out to see how they're going to do."

Sounds to us like a Msdemeanor. □

"The birthday cake we bought him had a typo in his name."

FRASER YOUNG
LITERARY CRYPT NO. 31

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer on page 58.

FDAU ZS OROPB DAQLORO-
COGH LV D YPZWK NLSO
DGK D VWPYPLVOK
CZHQOP-LG-JDN.
—FPZZUV QDBV

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The Ordeal of George Thomas Seaver

by Joseph Durso

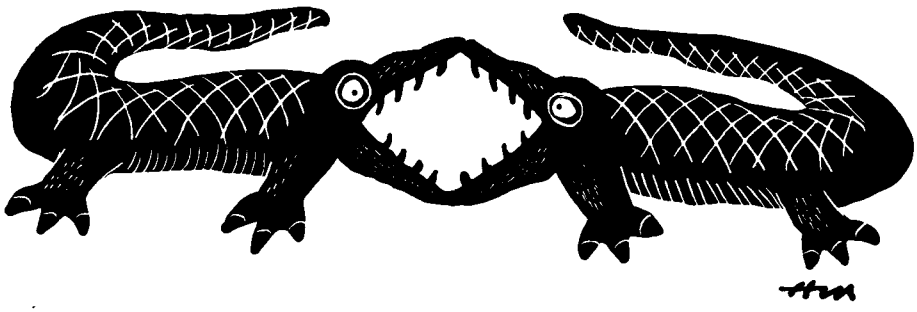
The struggle for men's minds, and maybe men's money, is turning these days to the public plot known as Shea Stadium in the Borough of Queens, City of New York. It involves the town's two baseball teams, the Mets and the Yankees, and, more particularly, their strong right arms: George Thomas Seaver, until recently the highest-paid player in the city's history, and James Augustus (Catfish) Hunter, who displaced him with a five-year contract having a gross auction value of $3,750,000.

They will be performing for the next six months from the same slab of whitened rubber, 6 inches wide and 24 inches long, at the center of the stage both teams will be sharing until the Yankees retreat cross-river next year to their own yard in the Bronx. And not since Babe Ruth appeared half a century ago to challenge John McGraw and his Giants has the city braced for such a duel.

The dramatic possibilities have even been steepened by the fact that Hunter switched sides from the feuding Oakland As, world champions for the last three years, to the Yankees, at a time when Seaver was startling people with an unexpected swoon. It happened last year, which was a heavy time for American institutions—for the Presidency, for the stock market, even for Seaver, the reigning cult figure of baseball. He suddenly lapsed into the slump, won only 11 games, lost 11, and suffered through a summer that mystified a public that had rated him a constant in a world of gyrating values. The slump overtook Seaver the way droughts of creativity have overtaken gifted novelists. The way a golfing calm overtook Arnold Palmer, who hasn't won a major championship in a decade. The way a running slump overtook Jim Ryun, who found himself besieged by fast new four-minute milers.

Was it the onset of age for a pitcher who won 135 games in seven seasons while striking out nearly one batter every inning? Was it a break in the cycle of excellence that traps the best athletes, actors, writers, and other performers? Was it in the cards for "Tom Terrific," who turned 30 in November, to make a comeback in 1975?

The questions matter—even to those millions of Americans who follow baseball only casually, but who know him as an Olympian personality: Seaver, who twice pitched the Mets to improbable pennants, who completed his degree at the University of Southern California by correspondence, who lifted his salary from $13,500 to $170,000, who was being paid $160 every time he faced a batter. Seaver, the educated manchild who boards team planes carrying best-selling books, literary journals, and the Sunday *New York Times* crossword puzzle. Seaver, the player representative and shop steward for all 25 men of the Mets. Seaver, the business conglomerate, TV personality, and intellectual force of a sport that has long since outgrown the country-boy image of Shoeless Joe Jackson and the animal-strength ideal of Babe Ruth.



When the talent recruiters of Southern Cal wanted to impress a high-school celebrity, they sent for Seaver. When the network wanted TV hosts for the Thanksgiving Day parade, they sent for Tom and his wife, Nancy. When the advertising agencies wanted a Camelot couple for commercials, they sent for the Seavers. When the publishing houses wanted books on an athlete performing gracefully under pressure, they sent for Tom Terrific.

When the Mets toured Japan last November, Tom was lionized as that all-American hero with "the famous rising fastball." Then he became an international hero after Sadaharu Oh, "the Babe Ruth of Japan," beat the Mets in their first game with a grand-slam home run and Seaver (who was not pitching) said: "Wasn't that perfect? When he was on deck, I looked over and thought, Wouldn't it be great if he got up with the bases loaded and hit one out of here? No one could have written a script like that: Sadaharu Oh hits a grand-slam home run to win the game. I don't think I ever had so much fun playing baseball."

When the tour ended, it seemed clear that the Americans had suffered an artistic failure but had scored a diplomatic success, mainly because of things like Seaver's parting observation: "More than anything else, I'll remember the relations with the Japanese players—having friends on 'the other side.' It's the thought that in the spring my new friends will be here in Japan playing the same game I'll be playing in New York. I'm taking home a whole education."

Now, facing that strange spring, he is back home, still carrying on a correspondence with Mr. Oh, while his international dimension grows. Meanwhile, the international mystery of his sudden slide from Olympus also continues to grow.

By any arithmetic, his slide was steep. He had been the winning pitcher in one-fourth of all the Mets' victories since 1967; he had won as many as 25 games in a season; he once struck out 19 batters in 9 innings, including the last 10 he faced. But in 1974 he pitched five times before winning; then he managed to win one game a month until midsummer; he injured his left hip and didn't do anything for three weeks, and once, after walking Andy Messersmith, the pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers, with the bases loaded and forcing in a run, the usually reserved Seaver flapped his arms at the umpire and complained: "It was a lousy call. I couldn't have thrown a better pitch, but the umpire missed it."

Looking back on his own ordeal is not easy for a perfectionist like Seaver, especially since it cost him a cut of $34,-

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Joseph Durso is a writer for The New York Times *and is the author of the forthcoming book* The Sports Factory.

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000 in his salary. Nor is it easy for any pitcher to concede that he has lost "a few inches" off his fastball. Nor for any public person to admit that age 30 may be a milestone. But, as he turns to the critical time of his career, he thinks now that he can view it all with a sort of clinical calm.

"You can't let it shoot down your entire career," he philosophizes. "Every intelligent athlete has got to realize it might happen in every professional career. You go through a phase, a transition period where you might suffer. You realize it, and the important thing is to adjust to it. It entered my mind, either you pitch effectively or you don't have a job. It was a very frustrating, a very long, season."

BUT WHAT HAPPENS emotionally when, on national television, a dignified and slightly pompous young man starts to lose the mastery that put him into the spotlight in the first place? Babe Ruth lost 88 points on his batting average and lost 21 home runs in 1925, the year of "the big tummyache" or whatever; but within two years he was again hitting his 60 home runs. Walter Johnson, who won 25 games or more for seven straight seasons, slipped a bit but then won 20 at the age of 38—with the Washington Senators. Warren Spahn, who won 20 or more for 13 seasons, dropped to a 14–19 record in 1952 but rebounded to win 23 games and then 21 the next two seasons.

"When I realized what was happening," Seaver remembers, "it involved an emotional strain. At first, when I couldn't throw the ball hard, I tried to throw it harder. I've always known where I stood, but suddenly I was confused and lost. It was before the All-Star Game in July when I hit the low point emotionally. I was just totally in the woods.

"My home life stayed stable. If this had happened in my second year, it might have suffered. But I had seven years under my belt and didn't go around raving at my wife and daughter. On the road, Bud Harrelson is my roommate and he leaves me alone when I'm down. I'm not a person who will spill it out, anyway. I did talk to my father about it when he came to New York and we'd be driving to the stadium. He was an athlete all his life, and he agreed more or less: Everybody's entitled to an off-year."

His father, Charles Seaver, played on the Walker Cup golf team 40 years ago and still plays tough golf. He lives in Fresno, Calif., and watches from a box seat behind third base whenever the Mets make San Francisco. Also watching every day is Ralph Kiner, who hit enough home runs to put him in the Hall of Fame this spring, and who now broadcasts the Mets' games.

"I've watched films of myself all winter and spring. I'm being more deliberate in my pitching motion, and I'm not worrying about Catfish Hunter."

"I tried to figure Seaver out all season," Kiner says, "and I'm convinced he suffered from an accumulation of little things, all the little things that separate the great ones from the good ones. One factor is age: He was going on 30 at the time. Sandy Koufax retired at 32. Warren Spahn stayed on into his 40s, but only by switching from being a fastball pitcher to a screwball pitcher. Robin Roberts extended his playing career by going from fastballs to curveballs. Bob Gibson threw hard for an awfully long time and didn't lose his fastball—but did lose his super-fastball."

The "little things" that count, Kiner believes, range all the way from luck to the covering on the ball—which was changed last year to cowhide when horsehide became scarce. To Seaver, the new ball seemed slippery, and his fast one didn't "move" as much. But he left that out of his own catalog of Reasons for the Ordeal. He also pitched with a sore hip much of the year and, for a while, insisted with a sort of excessive nobility that it was a "totally insignificant" factor. That is, until the doctors judged otherwise, it left him with a valid excuse—but it also left him with the danger of having a sore hip again.

SOME PEOPLE INSIST that Seaver's problem stems from the basic fact that he is a "power pitcher" in an era of power hitting: He stands six-foot-one, weighs 205 pounds, and has the full repertoire of pitches to "challenge" every batter. To him, it is always a question of "excellence"—the one goal he says he craves, the quality he professes to admire most in sluggers like Henry Aaron and Johnny Bench. Like Koufax, he is also intense; each of the 100 or so pitches he delivers in a nine-inning game is a money pitch.

During his one season in the minor leagues, Seaver gave it his "full rip" for 210 innings. As a rookie with the last-place Mets the following year, he worked 251 innings. Since then, he has averaged 275 or more. By the time the play-offs and the World Series roll around, he is dragging. The Mets, meanwhile, stood eleventh among the 12 teams in the National League in 1974 in batting and in runs scored.

"I'll tell you about Seaver," says Sparky Anderson, manager of the Cincinnati Reds. "For 250 innings, he's the best pitcher in baseball. These American League teams that face him in the Series have never seen him at his best. Baseball is an endurance test. With all the night games and traveling around the country for 162 games, you all start to drag by August. It takes supreme stamina to last."

"I misled myself," Seaver himself reflects, offering the last word on his own lonely season. "When I went to spring training a year ago, I was still concerned about my shoulder because it had been tired at the end of 1973. So I went through the spring taking care of my shoulder, not getting ready to pitch the season. I was still getting people out, but not getting my arm ready for the next six months.

"You bet I'm anxious about it now—you're talking about a career. But the doctor tells me there was no damage to my hip, I feel strong, I've watched films of myself at home all winter and in Florida this spring, I'm being more deliberate in my pitching motion, and I'm not worrying about Catfish Hunter."

"He's already starting to adjust," Ralph Kiner observes. "He used to have the philosophy that every time he got into a jam, he should strike them all out. Now he knows the important thing is just to *get* them out. But this year will be the critical one. If he starts badly, people will panic all over again."

But if he succeeds, the rest of the country can finally put aside the Ordeal of George Thomas Seaver and get back to fretting over everyday ordeals like the price of gold, the Dow-Jones average, the strictures of the petroleum-exporting lands, the flowering of the arts, the stability of the Presidency, and the state of the Union. □

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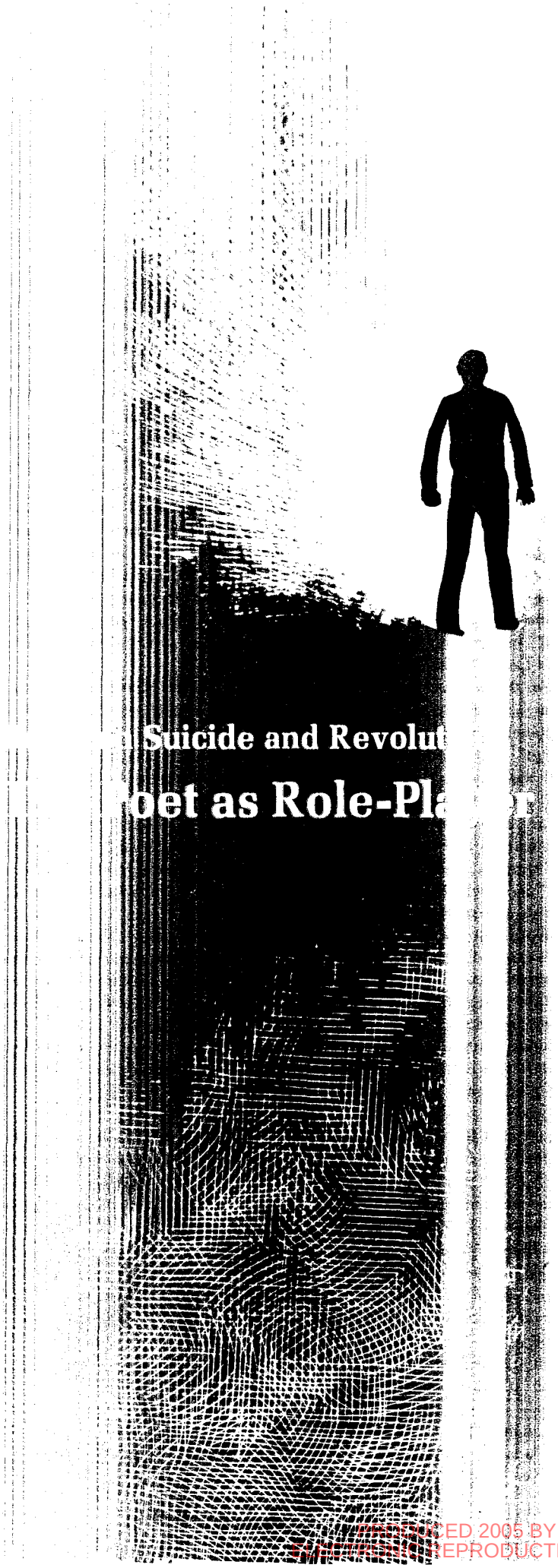

Depending on where h

by Edward Lucie-Smith

What matters more today—the poet or the poems he writes? People are, it seems to me, more interested in poets—in their love lives, their political passions, their eccentricities—than in their poetry; speaking as a poet, I find this frightening. I've no wish to become a perambulating cult-figure, a symbol out of somebody else's myth. I should like people to read my poetry and be moved by it for its own sake, not because of any scare headlines I may have figured in lately.

Yet like it or not, the poet-as-role-player is very much with us: Everywhere, poets are being "upped" because they embrace revolution, belong to an exotic minority, are on drugs, or—like Sylvia Plath—celebrate suicide as a life-affirming gesture. These poets are not ungifted, but they are vaunted for extraneous reasons. And I can't help feeling that this trend is a bad one—bad for society, bad for the republic of letters, and bad for the poet lionized for the wrong reasons. Above all, the trend provides no sunlight and growing space for the non-role-playing poet who laughs at the idea of anyone's hoisting him aloft as a standard-bearer.

The symbolic role, of course, is not new. The Romantics invented it, and poets like Byron and Pushkin played their parts with a real appetite for attention. The literature of the French nineteenth century is littered with minor figures like Gérard de Nerval and Petrus Borel, who are remembered less for what they wrote than for gestures like leading lobsters around on strings. At the end of the century France produced, in the person of Alfred Jarry, a gifted poet who was eventually eaten up and destroyed by Père Ubu, a character in his poetic drama *Ubu Roi*. Père Ubu was a roistering, foul-mouthed grotesque, and the play's impact was in part based on the public's belief that *Ubu Roi* was autobiographical. Nothing loath, Jarry did his

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ives and works, the poet today can be scapegoat, guerrilla, or dissident.

level, Rabelaisian best to live up to his public's expectations. In the end, Jarry *became* Père Ubu, and Ubu's appetites were the end of his creator. Max Jacob, another eminent poet, actually saw Jarry as a kind of Christ-figure. "Isn't his image that of Our Lord on earth, but turned inside out?" he asked. Late-Romantic hubris could aspire no higher.

The difference between the Romantics, who sacrificed themselves on the altar of their own genius, and the poets of today, is that we are far more passive. We accept the roles society imposes on us rather than inventing them for ourselves. In this sense, we have seen a surreptitious return of the idea of *decorum*—the graceful acceptance of esthetic and societal norms and forms—which Romanticism overthrew. All the poets I shall discuss are "decorous" in terms of some commonly accepted norm, though sometimes they live, or have deliberately placed themselves, in situations where different norms conflict.

IN THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES, for instance, the poet is often unconsciously assigned—and accepts—the role of scapegoat: He both reflects and symbolizes the despair and nihilism of a society that, though materially prosperous, is also spiritually empty. The role of nihilist can of course be played in different ways, the most spectacular of which is that adopted by the "confessional school" of American writers, sometimes known as "the suicide poets." Of the leading members of the school—Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, John Berryman, and Anne Sexton—only Lowell has not destroyed himself. The most recent loss is that of Anne Sexton, who killed herself last year.

The shocking thing about Sexton's suicide was that it surprised no one. It was accepted, even by those who genuinely mourned for her, with a certain degree of resignation. In a poem written nearly a decade ago, Sexton had expressed a kind of jealousy about the suicide of her friend Sylvia Plath:

Thief!
how did you crawl into,
crawl down alone,
into the death I wanted so badly and for so long. . . .

But Plath's suicide, the first in the series, excited not only the unhealthy envy of fellow writers, but also the emotions of a whole spectrum of contemporaries. Sometimes these emotions were less than creditable. Berryman's and Sexton's deaths, which followed within the decade, could be considered a response to the attitudes of their audience as much as to their own tensions. All too often, American and English poetry-readers have seemed like a crowd watching a man poised on the guardrail of a bridge, and shouting to him: "Jump!" Didn't Plath herself boast:

Dying
Is an art, like everything else.
I do it exceptionally well.

Suicide is by no means, of course, the only way the nihilism of Western society finds poetic expression. The poet may *identify* himself with the forces for destruction that he sees at work around him, instead of suicidally offering himself up as a victim. Critics have found this attitude to be one of the mainsprings of Ted Hughes's *Crow*, whose protagonist is born "trembling, featherless, elbows in the nest's filth," but finishes up by proving himself stronger and bleaker even than death. British poet David Holbrook, in a recent essay, offers this analysis: "At the hard core of *Crow* is a longing for non-being which alone seems real."

Some poets even combine a basic nihilism with a keen feeling for the details of ordinary life. In the poems of Philip Larkin, more than anywhere else, we British now recognize ourselves: We see reflected in them the decline of our nation, the curious lack of generosity in both our esthetic and social attitudes. Larkin makes his material palatable, even popular—his recent collection, *High Windows*, sold 11,000 copies in a country that notoriously does not read poetry. His poems combine strict formality of meter with a clever use of the demotic ("Stuff your pension!") and merciless keenness of social observation with a pervasive melancholy. "Why should I let the toad *work*/ Squat on my life?" he asks, but the question is useless, as it always will be.

Above all, Larkin is a poet of exclusions and limitations, and in this he represents the meritocratic society to which he belongs, accepting its constrictions while chafing at them. When a wider horizon opens, he admits he cannot cope with the experience—and the admission is flawlessly phrased:

Rather than words comes the thought of
high windows:
The sun-comprehending glass,
And beyond it, the deep blue air, that shows
Nothing, and is nowhere, and is endless.

Though Sexton and Larkin are outwardly very different, radically opposed in style and intention, the foundations upon which they try to build their poetry are identical—the sense of isolation and powerlessness. For both, the great lie is contained in the simple words "No one's alone"—words that actually turn up in the last line of one of Sexton's love poems.

In France—which has, in broad outlines, a society very similar to that of the United States and England—this frustration and purposelessness is expressed differently. Contemporary French poetry is much more deeply imbued with the modernist spirit. This spirit may first have surfaced in the poetry of Baudelaire, which is marked by a terrible and characteristic *ennui*—the famous Baudelairean spleen. Today, poetry in France has turned almost completely inward and is obsessed with linguistics and linguistic philosophy to the point where it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between poetry and philosophical comments on poetry.

ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD, the poet is far removed from this confined and helpless role. The forceful poetry of much of the Third World seems to lie at the opposite extreme from the spiritual emptiness, and echoes within emptiness, of so many Western poets. This is most conspicuously true perhaps of Latin America. There, young poets who have served and died as guerrillas have become the focal points of powerful contemporary myths. The only trouble is that the myths themselves are so rigid. Two guerrilla poets who have been extensively translated into English are the Peruvian Javier Héraud—who was shot

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by police as he floated in a canoe down the Madre de Dios river—and Otto Rene Castillo, a Guatemalan who, after several periods of exile, took to the jungle. In 1966, after being captured by government troops and tortured for four days, Castillo was burned alive.

It is undoubtedly what we know about the poet's life, and also about his death, that gives a special resonance to lines like these by Héraud:

> One afternoon he said to his girl:
> "I'm going, the rainy season's here,
> everything's all washed up.
> Life's got me by the throat. . . ."

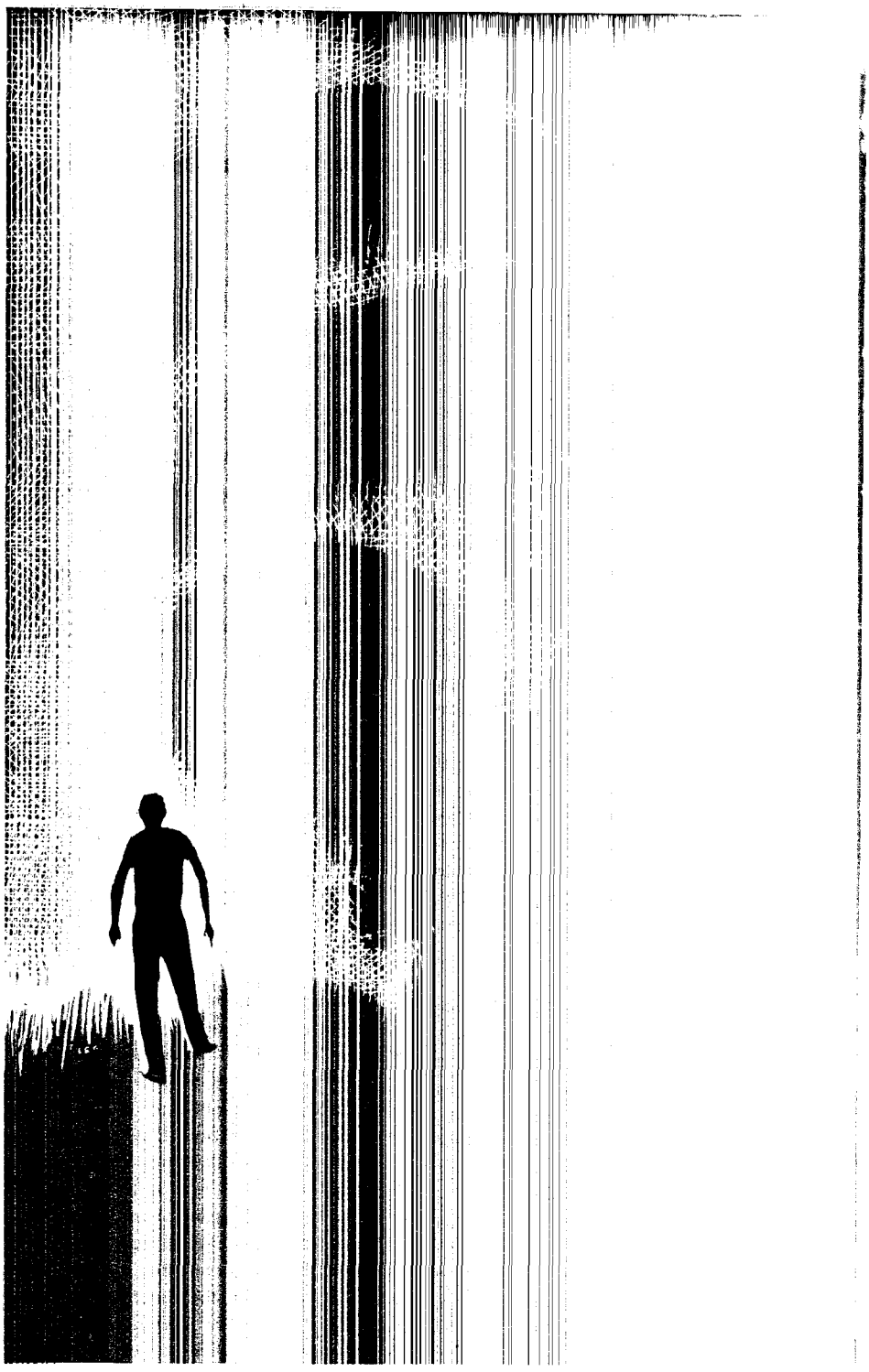
Whatever we think of this poem as poetry, we know it has been paid for in blood. Yet we also wonder how the poet could possibly have developed if he had survived.

A more complex case than either Héraud or Castillo is the Nicaraguan poet Ernesto Cardenal, who is hardly a guerrilla poet but who is bound to attract international attention, and who combines a number of apparently disparate elements in his life and in his work. Born in 1925, he was converted to Catholicism in 1956 and studied for a time under the American poet-priest Thomas Merton. Cardenal now runs a religious community on an island in Lake Nicaragua. In his most recent collection—*Homenaje a los indios americanos* ("Homage to the American Indians")—he uses material derived from various Indian cultures to comment indirectly on capitalist society. He is thus, in terms of method, a literary descendant of Ezra Pound, though opposed to him politically. Not all of Cardenal's work, however, is based on ancient or ethnic source material. He is the author, for example, of an *Oración por Marilyn Monroe*. The stereotype of the true guerrilla poet essentially does not fit Cardenal. He is not nearly so certain of the answers as those who take to the jungle with rifles. Rather than calling him a guerrilla, it is more accurate to call him simply a dissenter.

One writer who has well understood this aspect of the poet's role in the modern world is yet another Latin American, the sardonic Chilean Nicanor Parra, who offers the following advice to young poets:

> Write as you will
> In whatever style you like
> Too much blood has run under the bridge
> To go on believing
> That only one road is right.

Nevertheless, the expression of dissent, the inclination to say no, is a role poets



have assumed in many languages, in the Communist bloc as well as in the West. In the Soviet Union there are "degrees" of dissent. Some disagree within the limitations of the system—most spectacularly Yevtushenko and Voznesensky, who were recently described, not quite accurately, as "the twin columns of mercury in Sovietologists' barometers." Both men occupy the pedestals that Russia offers those whose writings are officially approved and receive the adulation and large editions that go with them. Every now and then they seem in danger of tumbling off, but it never quite happens. The occasional expression of personal opinion, like the occasional telegram of protest to Mr. Brezhnev, is often paid for, especially in Yevtushenko's case, in bad poems that toe the official line. Voznesensky, on the other hand, offers the fascinating spectacle of a man of talent and integrity who feels he cannot work outside Soviet society, and who therefore cannot reject outright the demands that it makes upon him.

A long way beyond the frontier that Yevtushenko and Voznesensky never quite bring themselves to cross is the clandestinely printed *samizdat* literature, which circulates by being passed from hand to hand. The *samizdat* poets include

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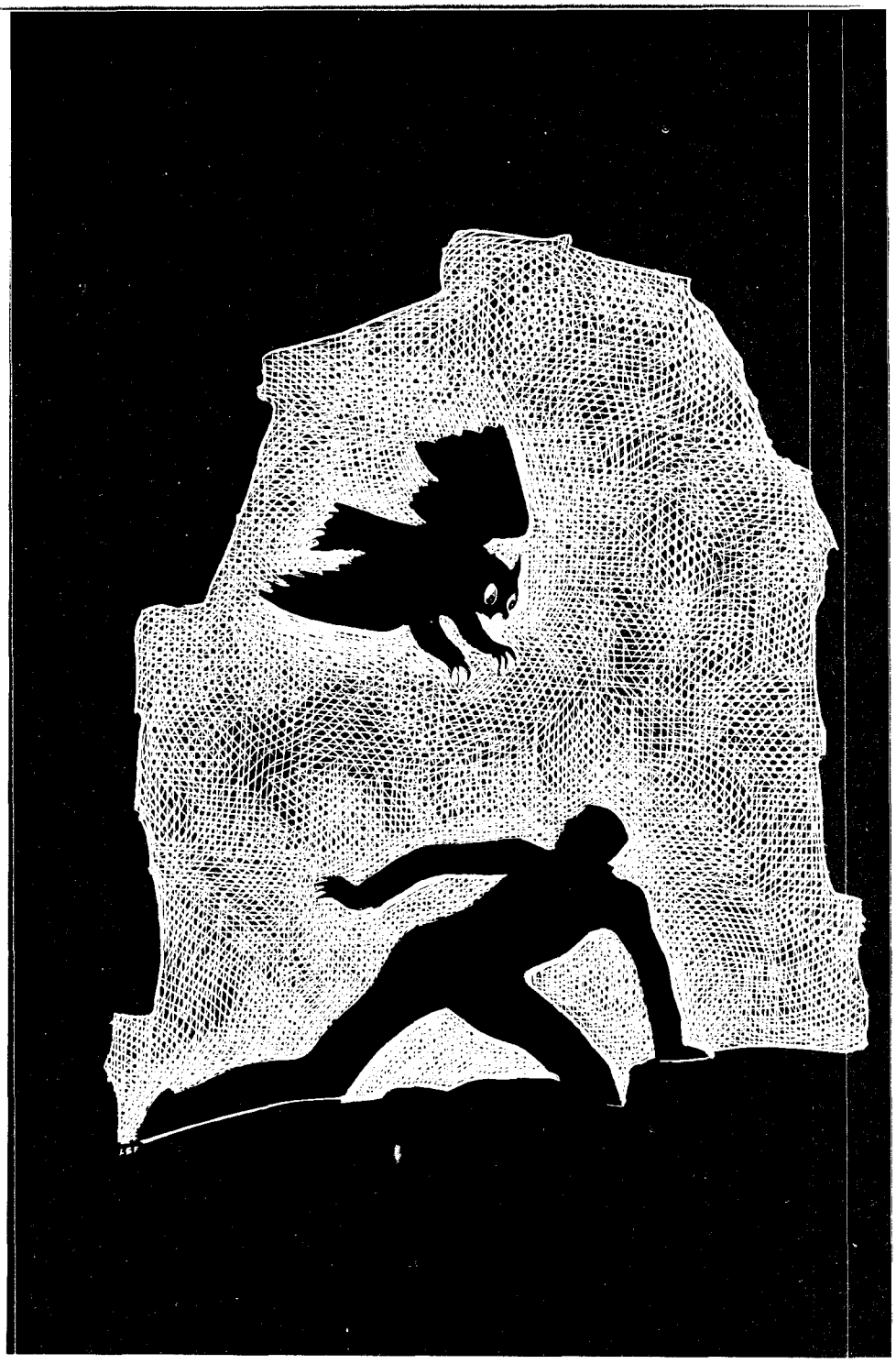
purely political dissenters, as well as those whose impulse toward individual expression is so instinctive that it inevitably brings them into conflict with the authorities. One such is Natalya Gorbanevskaya, a courageous civil-rights activist who was placed for a while in a psychiatric prison hospital. She has been very little published in official Soviet journals, despite her talent, while becoming well known abroad. What upsets the guardians of Russian culture in Gorbanevskaya's work is not so much its political content (it has very little) as its note of despair and hysteria. She has a tendency to compare a lover's hollowed shoulder to the executioner's block, to tell us suddenly that she is "roasting over a slow fire." These are breaches of Soviet poetic decorum and, as such, are just as unacceptable as unorthodox political opinions.

Another outcast Russian poet—Joseph Brodsky—is an outcast in the most literal sense, as he was recently expelled from the Soviet Union and is now teaching in America. His work, too, is essentially apolitical: Its dissent is at a fundamental level, concerning itself with the individual's claim to live and feel as he pleases. But, as with Natalya Gorbanevskaya, the acceptance Brodsky has met with in the West has been due, in part, to the fact that his poetry is easily assimilated to fashionable Western modes of feeling.

Even in those countries where the guerrilla poet, as a type, is officially idolized, the authorities have sometimes managed to come into embarrassing conflict with recalcitrant poets. In Cuba the arrest of the poet Herberto Padilla, and subsequent efforts by Western writers to get him released, precipitated a lasting breach between Castro and his supporters among European intellectuals.



IN EUROPE ITSELF the dissident poet either lives under a repressive regime and becomes a symbol of opposition to its repression, or he lives in a democracy and tries to act as the spur of a sluggish popular conscience. The first may have an easier task, at least from the literary point of view, than his colleague who lives in much less stringent circumstances.

A case which comes to mind is that of the Greek poet Yannis Ritsos. Ritsos is a Communist and has been imprisoned by various Greek regimes. Some of his work is about prisons, concentration camps, the offices where prisoners are interrogated. Paradoxically, these poems resemble those which Anna Akhmatova wrote about the cruelty and repression practiced by a regime of the Left. Ritsos's poems, however, are condemnations of right-wing dictatorship. Akhmatova was not by nature interested in politics; events forced her to become so. She started off as an Acmeist—that is, as a kind of late Symbolist. Her first husband, Nikolai Gumilev, also a poet, was shot by the Bolsheviks in 1921; her son Lev Gumilev was three times imprisoned; and she herself was the subject of a violent official attack in 1946, and was expelled from the Writers' Union in the same year. Similarly, Ritsos gives the impression of not being a political animal, but of having become politicized through personal experience of tragedy and injustice. What his poems share with Akhmatova's are extreme concentration of imagery, the determination to give suffering a voice, and a kind of unselfishness in putting poetic eloquence at the service of those who do not have the gift of words.

But while Ritsos's politics are certainly a very important element in the pattern of his life, they do not dominate his work to the extent of robbing it of its feeling for the texture of ordinary living. His poems are marked by absolutely precise

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observation—of emotional states as much as of external events:

> You keep expecting
> I'll say:
> "It isn't like this."
> This is how it is.
> For me too.
> Careful when you clip your nails.
> The scissors gleam.

In this respect he makes a glaring contrast with many of the "protest poets," whose performances are now a regular feature at international poetry festivals. Righteousness displays its wounds amid a cloud of woolly rhetoric. Even among the stars of this kind of occasion there are, however, some honorable exceptions. One is Hans Magnus Enzensberger, one of the most powerfully talented poets to have emerged from West Germany since World War II. Writing in German, Enzensberger enjoys a number of advantages that are perhaps not open to poets of the same type whose native language is English. Among these advantages one may count the resonance of the dark Hitlerian past, the example of Bertolt Brecht, and the respect that Germans traditionally accord to their leading writers.

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Enzensberger uses German seriousness as a springboard into irony—an irony of a very different kind from that used by a poet such as Philip Larkin. Enzensberger questions the values of Western society, and he tries to make poetry into an instrument for social change. But he, and the reader with him, is haunted by a sense of its feebleness, almost its irrelevance:

> Something must be done right away
> that much we know
> but of course it's too soon to act
> but of course it's too late in the day
> oh we know
> we know we're really rather well off
> and that we'll go on like this
> and that it's not much use anyway
> oh we know

The dissenting poet, working in a context that is not totally repressive, suddenly finds his work slipping out of focus and comes closer and closer to the nihilism of colleagues who ignore social issues.

WHAT ALTERNATIVES ARE THERE for the poet who does not want to play one of the narrow range of symbolic roles I have outlined above? It is strange how difficult it is for any poet to escape from them, for the writers I have discussed certainly form a good cross section of the best work being done in this field. If we condemn them for accepting the stereotypes their readers impose upon them, we come perilously close to condemning the state of poetry as a whole.

Two ways in which Western poets try to escape from the conditions I have described are by retiring into pure esthetics or by rejecting the modern world altogether. Two examples of the first choice, one in England and the other in America, are Charles Tomlinson and John Ashbery. Tomlinson's poems are maps of esthetic experience—they tell us about what is seen, rather than about the emotions a given sight may arouse. Ashbery goes much further and deliberately turns the poem into an artifact—the equivalent of an abstract painting. It comes as no surprise to discover that Ashbery is also a distinguished critic of modern art. Both he and Tomlinson have a following, but one doubts if either could become a major cult-figure.

The same could be said of the Welsh country clergyman R. S. Thomas, a very different figure from his namesake Dylan. Thomas moralizes sternly about his Welsh parishioners in a way that relates to the poetry written by the English Georgians—men like Edmund Blunden and John Drinkwater—much earlier in the present century. None of the three poets I have just mentioned has the sheer delight in words and their possibilities which distinguishes a man like e. e. cummings, one of the great modernist independents, and this seems likely to keep them permanently in the second rank.

Paradoxically enough, it is the poets who have lived under the toughest conditions, such as Gorbanevskaya and Ritsos, who seem to have been freest to follow their own path, to seek for an expression that jets out irresistibly. Even so, we notice how close Gorbanevskaya in particular comes to the fashionable nihilism of the West. If she says, at the end of a brief lyric, that "In the empty sky/a magpie wags its tail," both tone and context immediately remind us of Ted Hughes's all-devouring crow. Perhaps what poets need to do is simply to admit that there is no form of society which currently means them much good. A period of "silence, exile, and cunning" did the original modernists no harm, and might be salutary for us, too. Poets need the courage to say no to their publicists and admirers as well as to their oppressors. The best poetry being written today may well be that which keeps the lowest profile. □

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World Literary Survey

In mainland China, a best-seller costs as little as 20 cents; in West Germany, as much as 15 dollars. But whatever the cost, books are being published and read throughout the world today at an unprecedented rate. In this issue, SR takes a look at the literary scene in a dozen representative areas. Our aim is not to attempt a critical evaluation of contemporary literary trends, but rather to report on the kind of books that are engaging the attention of readers in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

Brazil

Brazil is a big country with a small language. The Portuguese language sets it apart from other countries with a transplanted European culture and would seemingly have given it a rare and unique literature. Instead of being hothouse art, however, Brazilian writing has been even more in the mainstream than the easily available Spanish American literature. Geographically, Brazil is huge, but, until recently, what could be called effective Brazil has been a long coastal strip, a kind of Atlantic California. The population has burgeoned of late, but illiteracy has soared along with it. Literacy itself, of course, does not connote a "reading public"; so the audience for the Brazilian writer is quite limited. His works can be read only by the reading elite in his own country and in Portugal. But good writing has still flourished in Brazil. If this most sophisticated of Latin American countries does not feed its authors, it does go to great lengths to publish them and to respect them.

The writer in Brazil is hard put to earn a living from his craft and most often must do what we call moonlighting. Down there he is called a *cabide de emprêgos* ("a coatrack of jobs"). One might track a writer down at the ministry, where he holds down a job, or at the newspaper or at the university, sometimes even at the bank—to work, not to deposit. Fortunately, judging from the results, his best efforts are spent on his writing. It is not a labor of love, though; the Brazilian writer is most professional. He is an amateur at the other jobs, even though he can be an expert. The great João Guimarães Rosa, for instance, held the rank of ambassador at the foreign ministry and was the resident authority on frontiers.

IN BRAZIL the writer is traditionally respected as a kind of priest. He is removed from day-to-day management, but he is given a certain respectful support. Knowing that the book market is so small that publication is risky, the government has long maintained a National Book Institute, which guarantees the sale of a certain number of copies to libraries, schools, and other public institutions. This has made possible the publication of many works that otherwise would never have seen print. Government subsidy, of course, means censorship—the official board must approve all manuscripts—but fortunately the Book Institute is less strict than the guardians of the press, perhaps because the book-reading public is not worth too much bother. In deciding what should and should not be published, this regime seems more prudish than political. (Even so, it is more broad-minded than most school boards in the United States.) Antônio Callado's *Quarup,* a strongly political novel, was published; Nélida Piñon's *A Casa da Paixão* ("The House of Passion") was delayed because of its explicit sexuality, but when it did come out its cover pictured a nude woman; Myriam Campello's *Cerimônia da Noite* ("Night Ceremony"), a story of incest—a tender tale unique of its kind—not only passed but won a prize.

Literary prizes are an important part of publishing in Brazil. The monetary emoluments are scant, but a prize guarantees publication (if passed by the censors), along with the concomitant publicity. There is no dearth of these prizes—sponsored by municipalities, publishers, and foundations—and almost every book worth its salt has been awarded one.

AS A MORE OR LESS elite activity, writing in Brazil can be a more social activity than it is elsewhere. The literary world there is comparable in many ways to the world of the theater in the United States, with writers, publishers, and hangers-on all caught up in a great whirl. There are even premieres *(lançamentos),* social events that go well beyond our suburban book-and-author luncheons or our autographing sessions in book sections of department stores.

Literary journalism itself is highly developed in Brazil. Along with the usual serious criticism, which tends to be much more academic than in the United States, there is a great deal of reportage on the world of books. Brazil's leading newspaper, *O Estado de São Paulo,* has a weekly literary supplement, which combines news and criticism, and the official journal of Minas Gerais has an equally fine and independent *Suplemento Literário,* which is national and international in scope.

In spite of the high level of its own writing, Brazil continues to be an importer rather than an exporter of literature. North American, European, even Spanish American (via New York and Paris) best-sellers become best-sellers in Brazil, to the exclusion of superior native works. Now that the Spanish countries of Latin America have made their impact on the North American literary market, one would imagine that Brazil would be right behind. Not so. In spite of its unique position, perhaps because of its different language, Brazil has not exported much of its flourishing literary production. The great Guimarães Rosa has gone almost unnoticed, Machado de Assis arrived almost a century late, and others have not even broken through. An astonishing novel by Osman Lins, *Avalovara,* will soon be published here, however. It may finally serve to arouse serious interest in

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this other, quite different, third of Latin America.

GREGORY RABASSA

China

After two decades of frustrating attempts to reorient veteran authors to the mass line, the Chinese leadership finally came to the conclusion several years ago that it would take a new generation of writers and artists to portray the new society. Consequently, the call went out for training peasant-worker-soldier writers and artists. This new departure presented some practical problems. A peasant might be able to pour out short, free verses of the folk-song variety or to sketch or paint village scenes. But a long novel or a large mural would require special skills aside from enthusiasm and dedication. So whenever a peasant or a worker was spotted who seemed to possess the aptitude for larger creative works, he was encouraged to do so and to become a professional.

The emphasis on reflecting life in the Socialist era has had the effect of sharply restricting the themes of contemporary Chinese novels. The new crop of post–Cultural Revolution titles shows a narrow range of topics—an agricultural mutual-aid team (*The Golden Road*), mining workers (*The Seething Mountains*), a barefoot doctor (*Hung-yü*), educated youth in the countryside (*Storming Tiger Cliff*), a state farm at the Amur River (*Sun Over Riverside*), reclamation of coastal wasteland (*Niu-t'ienyang*), and the recent naval clashes with warships of the Saigon regime (*Sons and Daughters of Hsisha*).

Most of the novels, true to tradition, are voluminous. Priced from 0.38 to 1.40 yuan for the paperback edition (1 yuan is worth 50 cents), they are rather expensive for workers who earn roughly 68 to 168 yuan per month, and are virtually beyond the means of unskilled workers and peasants. This does not mean, however, that those at the lowest end of the income scale have no access to books. Even in backwater areas, most production brigades maintain a small library or a reading room where new titles are available. This explains why most books sell at least half a million copies and why a best-seller may reach the 5-million mark.

A Chinese author receives a lump fee from the state publishing house as soon as his manuscript is accepted. No royalties are paid thereafter. This was generally the case even in pre-Communist days. Today, of course, the work belongs to the people after its author's labor has been rewarded. Strictly speaking, there are no full-time writers in the People's Republic of China; they are either peasant-worker-soldier amateurs or professionals associated with newspapers, journals, or publishing houses. The latter draw a salary of 200 to 300 yuan per month, plus fees for individual pieces, which puts them in the high-income bracket.

SINCE WRITERS, like everyone else, are supposed to serve the people, they must reflect in their works the life and aspirations of the masses. Hao Jan, at 42 the most popular of the new generation of writers, spends several months each year with poor and lower-middle-class peasants in villages. An astute writer, he observes peasant life with keen eyes, absorbs dialects and slang like a sponge, and has an enormous capacity for storing up episodes. Having earned his reputation as a short-story writer, he tried his hand at a novel. His *Bright Sunny Days*, a three-volume story of an agricultural cooperative, was published in 1964-66 and became an instant best-seller.

Even the work of such an author must reach down to the masses. Writing about his second long novel, *The Golden Road*, Hao Jan tells how a few hundred copies of the first draft were circulated among peasant-worker-soldier readers for their comments. A dozen meetings were held to discuss the theme, plot, characterization, style, even the punctuation. Those queried apparently enjoyed a sense of participation. In the middle of one such meeting, a village cadre broke in—after bicycling 50 *li* (20 miles) in windy weather—to make several suggestions, then immediately rode back to attend to other urgent business.

JOE C. HUANG

France

Inflation and the energy crisis have persuaded many French readers that the future isn't what it used to be. Gone is the technocratic optimism that gave Montparnasse its new skyscraper; gone, too, is the old Gaullist feeling of self-sufficiency. When an oil emir feels a draft, a Paris businessman sneezes.

A sign of the new mood during the past winter has been the sale of 300,000 copies of *L'Imprécateur*, a fiercely, hilariously anti-technocratic novel written by René Victor Pilhes, a veteran adman, and published by the trend-conscious Editions du Seuil. The protagonist in this piece of alienated farce is Rossery & Mitchell, a cephalopod American-based multinational corporation whose French tentacle occupies a steel-and-glass slab, symbolically near a Paris cemetery. When weird things, including the sudden appearance of a crack in the base of the slab, begin to happen at R&M, the junior executives abandon their business-school rationalism, skid into a medieval panic, and set out like a squadron of dotty Arthurian knights to run down the mysterious "imprecator" who has put a hex on the company. There are discourses in wild management jargon, some torturing and murdering, an inquisitorial trial, a lot of detective-thriller suspense, and a nightmarish underground denouement in which the fissured building collapses on the executives. The moral might be that capitalism will succumb to neurosis from within rather than to revolution from without.

Recoil from the future has also provided more impetus for French retrospection, which was already going strong—in books as well as in films, clothes, pop music, and the Art Deco revival—before the present economic slump began. Much of the local nostalgia is focused on the period just before and during World War II. Hitler has been resurrected fictionally and nonfictionally in half a dozen thick volumes. Pierre Seghers's monumental anthology of clandestine wartime verse, *La Résistance et ses poètes* (Editions Seghers), has done well enough in the stores to shake the widespread conviction that only poets read poetry. Going back further, Edmonde Charles-Roux, a former *Vogue* editor, has had a fine critical and commercial success with a life of Coco Chanel, titled *L'Irrégulière* and published by Grasset, in which one discovers that the great fashion designer was indeed highly "irregular."

IF YOU DEEPEN the time perspective of *la mode rétro* a bit beyond living memory, you are in the realm of the old-fashioned historical novel, and here the strangest and most brilliant—in spite of some unconvincing dialogue – French best-seller of recent months (about

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90,000 buyers so far) has been Dominique Fernandez's *Porporino ou les Mystères de Naples* (Grasset). The narrator is a 70-year-old castrato who in 1820 decides to write down, merely for his pleasure, his memories of his career as a male soprano. There are fascinating evocations of a lovely, rotten, reactionary Naples stinking in the sunshine, and of the world of eighteenth-century Italian opera, especially at the then-flourishing Teatro San Carlo. There are also some well-managed appearances of such real people as Casanova, Cimarosa, and the young Mozart. Rather more important, however, than the period background and the intermittent story is a perversely poetic defense of castration that runs throughout the book, echoing back into ancient myth and forward into the unisexual yearnings of today. The reader is given to understand that perhaps the future, while our race lasts, should belong to the surgically arrested adolescent. No more tyrannical fathers, no more Oedipus complexes, no more baritones.

In sum, *Porporino* is mostly a novelized essay, half-serious and half-ironical, in psycho-cultural history, just as *L'Imprécateur* is mostly a novelized socio-economic tract, half-serious and half-buffoonish. And the two books can safely be said to represent a main current. Not the only current, of course. Last winter's winner of the Goncourt Prize (which practically guarantees a sale of 200,000 copies) was Pascal Lainé's *La Dentellière* ("The Lacemaker," published by Gallimard), a quiet, beautifully written little novel about a sad love affair between a student and a working girl. Nevertheless, what a great many French readers of fiction seem to want is something with an aggressive content, an amusing or shocking thesis, not something in which formal values are the author's chief concern. Publisher Jérôme Lindon, whose Editions de Minuit has in its catalog such formalists as Michel Butor and Alain Robbe-Grillet, is even of the opinion that "today in France an attempt to launch a movement in pure literature, another version of the *nouveau roman* of 20 years ago, has become practically unthinkable."

Publishers who may not agree with Lindon have the economic odds heavily against them. In France, as elsewhere, book-production costs of all kinds have risen dismayingly, and the price of paper has gone up quite unbelievably during the past 12 months—more than 100 percent for some commonly used varieties. There is obviously a limit to what can be passed on to the customers, and the limit may not be far off, for the price of an ordinary novel with the usual French paper cover has about doubled since 1971 and is now running at the franc equivalent of between five and nine dollars. Efforts to modernize distribution, notably by the opening of a cut-rate book supermarket on the Paris Left Bank, have met resistance from small dealers and also from the publishers' association, which is afraid of being maneuvered into giving rebates. Increasing the number of dealers is scarcely feasible, for France already has what is probably the most dense book-retailing network in the world—about 27,000 outlets, if you count newsstands and the like. Increasing the number of book-readers in the country seems equally unlikely, for the total has long been hovering stubbornly at less than half the adult population. In short, there is much in the outlook that warrants betting only on presumably sure things.

ROY MCMULLEN

(Continued on next page.)

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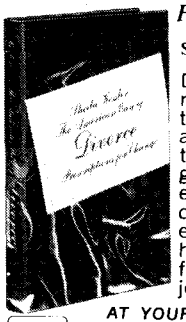

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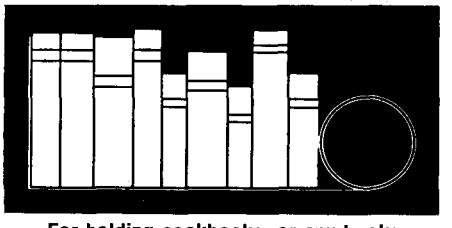

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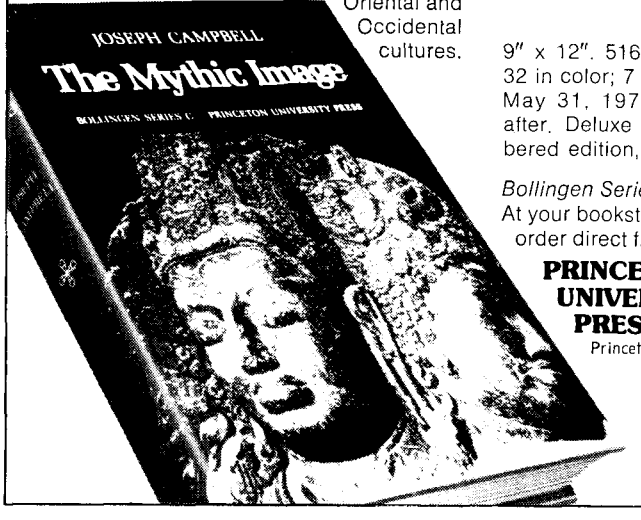

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(Continued from page 21.)

Great Britain

Nostalgia is rapidly replacing flagellation, of self and others, as *le vice anglais*. Best defined by an eighteenth-century doctor, Thomas Arnold, as "a variety of pathetic insanity," the nostalgic sickness is maddeningly evident in Britain's almost total absorption with the past and indifference to the future. While this may be an understandable emotional posture in a country down on its luck, its cultural effect is a growing insularity—an unhealthy desire to cut off all foreign influence—that is fittingly symbolized by the government's cancellation of a project to tunnel under the English Channel and link Britain with the mainland of Europe.

In publishing the nostalgic urge is manifest in an inordinate number of biographies of the long dead and often best forgotten, together with a market for superficial history and pattern-making on a grand scale. It is a sign of the times that the top-selling books come not from an old-established firm, but from BBC Publications, a subsidiary of the British Broadcasting Corporation. Television is now the single most powerful influence on book-making and book-buying. For the second year, in part because of reruns of the TV programs, Alistair Cooke's elegantly turned *America* has been the most sought-after book. Its nearest rival is Dr. Jacob Bronowski's essentially optimistic and anthropocentric *The Ascent of Man*, also related to a TV series. Not far behind, with sales approaching 150,000 copies, is Mark Arnold-Foster's *The World at War*, a companion to an authoritative TV series. Half of the 10 best-selling books of 1974 had their origins in television. TV producers can even be found peddling the book rights to forthcoming programs while at the same time searching for ghostwriters to do the actual work. The literary editor of the London *Observer*—disappointed by this predominance of television books and by the lack of variety of other books—has stopped publishing a best-seller list.

The abject unoriginality of British publishing is revealed in the number of biographies of Edward VII—at least six, including a fictional treatment—that are appearing this spring. Only one has any pretensions to scholarship. Why this industry devoted to an undistinguished monarch? The simple answer is that there is to be a television series on him.

No centenary of the birth or death of a once-well-known Englishman or woman now passes uncelebrated by a new biography. Charles Kingsley's death 100 years ago was recently marked by the publication of two lives of this muscular Victorian churchman, remembered for his addiction to cold baths as a moral aid, and for his writing of the sanctimonious nursery classic *The Water Babies*. The better of the two, Susan Chitty's *The Beast and the Monk* (the title derives from the forgotten part of E. M. Forster's aphorism that begins "Only connect"), also satisfied the other preference of book-buyers—for the revelation of a dark secret, preferably of a sexual nature. Kingsley, Lady Chitty has discovered, was a man of abundant sexuality. She uncovered many previously unpublished letters and some clumsy drawings, which once shocked Nathaniel Hawthorne, of Kingsley and his wife in ecstatic embrace. Heaven, according to Kingsley, would consist of eternal sexual intercourse (and many publishers try to create that heaven on earth). Lady Chitty's reward is a best-selling book.

When the British drop biographies, they turn to natural history. The most surprising best-sellers of recent months have been two field guides, *Wild Flowers of Britain and Northwestern Europe* and *Trees of Britain and Northern Europe*.

The former has sold 600,000 copies in Europe as a whole, and between them they have sold more than 650,000 copies in Britain alone. The quantities are such that they are obviously being bought by people who have little intention of seeing either a real tree or flower, however tame. The appeal is to armchair naturalists, part of a vague self-sufficiency and back-to-the-land movement, a nostalgia for a rural past that is best enjoyed at a distance. Another popular book, having sold more than 100,000 copies in two years, is Richard Mabey's *Food for Free*, a guide to all the edible berries, lichens, and fungi to be found in fields and hedgerows. Again, few readers can have put it to functional use. Such is this unnatural appetite that the publishing firm William Collins, which has cornered this particular market, has more than 100 natural-history books awaiting publication over the next five years.

And what of the novel? Little for anyone's comfort. The situation is serious enough for the Arts Council to have helped sponsor the New Fiction Society, a book club specializing in contemporary fiction. Its influence, however, is likely to be minimal. The club's order to one publisher was for 400 copies of a new novel, hardly enough to stimulate sales. The serious novelist's chance of survival depends upon the Public Lending Right [see *Artsletter*, page 35], the promised legislation to provide royalties on books borrowed free from the public-library system.

The novels that sell are a familiar mixture of violence and fantasy, thrillers that reflect conservative values. Richard Adams has followed his bunny epic, *Watership Down*, with *Shardik*, an altogether harsher fantasy, set in an imaginary country, about the deification of a giant bear. Some 20,000 words that served to put this allegory within the frame of reference of the modern world were cut from the original manuscript before publication. The publisher reckoned that readers prefer their fantasy straight.

There are those who see the dominance of biography as healthy, who feel that writers will abandon fiction in favor of direct personal reminiscence. Whether that is true, certainly a book creating intense interest at the moment is Gerald Brenan's *Personal Record 1920–1972*. Brenan, who has lived in Spain for many years, is a survivor of that powerful group in pre-war English literary life, the Bloomsbury set—where, as some wit has said, "the couples were triangles and everyone lived in squares." Brenan himself formed one side of a complex figure. He was in love with the group's sad, suicidal *femme fatale* Dora Carrington, who married his friend Ralph Partridge and who also shared the bed of the predominantly homosexual Lytton Strachey. With extraordinary

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candor and devastating insight, Brenan re-creates his affairs, his strange marriage to an American, Gamel Woolsey, who loved someone else, and his current relationship with a girl 50 years his junior. While Brenan's sales may depend upon his sexual subject matter, the quality of his writing should ensure the book's survival long after television has gone the way of the magic lantern.

JOHN WALKER

Hungary

Soccer players and peasants are the negative heroes of two books that have been politically sensitive best-sellers during the past winter in Hungary. A young Hungarian writer, Antal Végh, author of 11 books and 3 plays, has become a household name only after publication of his latest book, a slim volume of 170 pages, *Why Is Hungarian Soccer Sick?* A first printing of about 25,000 copies, priced at 11 forints (about 50 cents at the tourist rate of exchange), was sold out within a few days last September. By November the pocketbook was going for $25 in the black market.

Hungary, once a world power in soccer, could not even qualify for last year's world championships. Antal Végh did not just deal with soccer as the most popular sport. He painted a somber picture of the all-pervading corruption—personal and institutional bribery with matches freely bought and sold—involving not only players and club officials but also high party and state officials, even army generals. In short, he wrote a thrilling social study in depth about the moral degradation of a supposedly Socialist society.

There is apparently no question of a second printing, though the book would easily have found several hundred thousand buyers. Yet the fact that such a politically explosive shocker could have been published at all indicates the relative leniency of the 17 state-owned and party-controlled publishing houses, a phenomenon unmatched in any other Communist-ruled country except Yugoslavia.

György Moldova's *The Complaint of the Guard* is what may be called a literary nonfiction work about the past misfortunes and present problems of the peasants and others living in 18 villages in Hungary's western border regions. Since time immemorial, these communities have "guarded" the country; hence the title of this controversial book. The 40-year-old writer, in some ways comparable to Truman Capote, evokes the chilling memory of the Fifties, the Stalinist era when so many peasants were deported or harassed as "kulaks," the Russian word for prosperous farmers. Serialized last year in the literary monthly *Kortárs*, Moldova's new book is undoubtedly the second most controversial best-seller of the season.

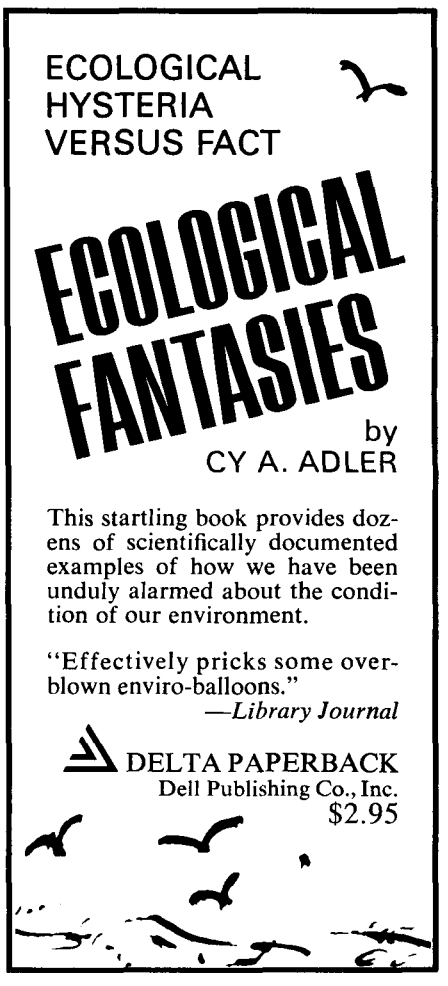
These two examples, however, may well be deceptive. There has been evidence lately of a more restrictive trend in cultural policy. The police actions against nonconformist writers and critics last autumn indicate an ominous tightening of the screws.

The most prominent victim was György Konrád, whose widely acclaimed first novel, *The Visitor*, was published in 1969 and was translated into several foreign languages. After a long-drawn-out struggle with his publisher and party officials over "recommended" cuts in his new novel, *The City-Founder*, Konrád and two other dissident intellectuals were detained for five days last October and allegedly given the choice of leaving the country or facing charges of "violating the Hungarian penal code"—circulating and smuggling unpublished manuscripts to the West. While Konrád is an outstanding writer, the case of the young radical poet Miklos Haraszti became a *cause célèbre* primarily for political reasons. He was given an eight-month suspended sentence in January 1974 for "incitement against state institutions"—circulating copies of his "New Left"–style book, *The Piece Wage*, which sharply criticizes the alienation and exploitation of the workers in a Budapest tractor plant.

It is something of an irony that Hungarian writers become well known in the West only if they are subjected to persecution. This was the case with Tibor Déry, the doyen of Hungarian letters who spent four years in prison after the 1956 uprising. Yet who knows that last winter, on his eightieth birthday, the same writer received one of the highest state decorations, or that almost 300,000 copies of his novels have been printed during the last two decades?

The problem of *"Enrichissez-vous"* in the wake of economic reforms launched in 1968, the glaring social inequalities in an allegedly proletarian state, and in a broader sense the relationship between power and the people have remained the principal themes of Hungarian literature. While the grand old men of Hungarian letters, Gyula Illyés and Déry, focus on old age and death, a number of highly gifted younger writers, such as Endre Fejes (his *Iron Scrap Cemetery*, about a worker's family since World War I, was published in eight editions between 1964 and 1973!), Ferenc Sánta, Gyula Hernádi, Miklós Mészöly, Ákos Kertész, and Erzsébet Galgoczi, are concerned with "old-fashioned" human values and the changes in life-style and patterns of behavior under the shattering impact of post–World War II revolutionary changes in Hungarian society.

Last but not least, Hungary—with a population of 10.5 million—is the home of poetry. The excellent literary-political weekly *Élet és Irodalom* ("Life and Literature") publishes annual statistics about the number of poems printed in Hungary. During recent years the annual average was 2,600 poems written by some 400 poets. Sixty-four volumes of verse in 250,000 copies were published last year. An unbelievable figure, since, if measured in comparative figures, it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would mean well over 5 million (generally hardcover) copies of collected poems in the United States!

Unfortunately, Hungarian is a Finno-Ugric language of "luxury"—belonging to a family of languages far removed from the Indo-European tongues of its neighbors—an insurmountable barrier in communication with the outside world. The occasional translations of Hungarian poems are generally well-meaning but pedestrian, if not misleading, attempts at conveying the beauty of the original. Thus, for example, the latest verse of Ferenc Juhász, at 47 the greatest Hungarian poet and certainly one of the greatest in the world, is bound to remain a lost treasure for English-speaking readers. Yet poetry belongs to the essence of Hungarian literary life and traditionally offers the greatest scope for exciting and creative experimentation. Nostalgia for Europe and the world, coupled with the awareness of the linguistic barrier, thus provides the unique background to the Hungarian literary scene.

PAUL LENDVAI

India

The Indian writer has never had it so good. For the first time in the history of India many writers and poets are able to live by writing. Literacy has risen dramatically: When India became independent, in 1947, only 13 out of 100 could sign their names; today almost half the populace can read and write. In a population of 600 million this means more than 250 million potential readers.

State patronage has also played a significant role in bettering the lot of writers. The Sahitya Akademi ("Academy of Letters"), set up in 1954, has been commissioning translations of foreign works, both classic and modern, into Indian languages and from one Indian language to another; awarding prizes of 5,000 rupees ($670) every year for outstanding works of fiction and poetry in each of the country's 15 officially recognized languages; and arranging literary conferences. Each of India's 22 states has a similar academy extending patronage to men of letters in its region, and every large city has a Tagore Theatre, where works of playwrights can be performed. The National Book Trust and state-sponsored language trusts arrange publication of works that commercial publishers are reluctant to handle. All-India Radio, which claims to reach 70 percent of the population, has well-known writers, poets, and playwrights on its payroll. A good radio play has a fair chance of being translated into all Indian languages and earning as many royalty checks. Successful writers acceptable to the Establishment are nominated to the upper house of the Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and to state legislatures, and are named in the annual honors list. By now the number of poets, playwrights, and novelists who have earned state patronage in some form or other runs into the thousands. Of these, the elite are a dozen winners of the Bharatiya Jnanpith Award of 100,000 rupees ($13,335), set up by an industrial house.

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE no reliable figures on publishing and bookselling in India, according to UNESCO only seven countries publish more titles than India does. More than 11,000 firms are listed in the *Directory of Indian Publishers*; among them they publish upward of 14,000 titles every year. English, though frowned upon by the patriotic and read by no more than 2.5 percent of the population, is still well ahead of all the Indian languages: 40 percent of all books published in India are in English; English newspapers and journals command larger circulations and pay more for articles than do journals in vernacular languages.

The national language, Hindi—spoken by over 140 million people—comes a poor second. But Hindi is fast catching up and has already surpassed English in the realm of fiction and poetry. Whereas the most celebrated Indo-Anglian novelist, R. K. Narayan, rarely sells more than 10,000 copies of a new novel, the works of the most widely read Hindi writer, Gulshan Nanda, go into many editions of 50,000 each. His *Jheel Key Us Par* ("On the Other Side of the Lake") has broken all Indian records, having sold more than 1.5 million copies in three years. Nanda, like many other Hindi writers, is also much in demand by the film industry. When their novels are bought, these writers are also commissioned to write the film scripts and the dialogue, and they earn enormous fees. Hitherto only one novel in English, R. K. Narayan's *The Guide*, has been filmed.

Poets writing in Indian languages do even better. Most of them begin their careers by appearing at poetry symposia *(Kavi Sammelans)*, which draw enormous crowds. Thereafter their poems appear in journals and newspapers (most papers devote a column or two to poetry every day), and, finally, they bring out anthologies of their works.

If poets manage to gain entry to the film business, their future is assured. They compose lyrics to suit the scenes, and some of the top Urdu poets—the language in which most film songs are written—command fees between 30,000 and 100,000 rupees ($4,000 to $13,335) for composing half a dozen lyrics. All transactions in the film industry are in cash and are rarely reported to income-tax authorities.

The Indians' reading tastes are very different from those of Europeans or Americans. Religion, science, philosophy, economics, and politics are more avidly read than fiction or poetry. Translations of the *Gita* and the *Upanishads* are steady sellers. Books on Hinduism, notably the works of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, ex-President of the republic, and the *pensées* of Krishnamurti, are found on the shelves of every public library. Of contemporaries, the most highly rated is Nirad C. Chaudhuri *(Autobiography of an Unknown Indian, The Continent of Circe)*. Some of the esteem he enjoys is due to his harsh criticism of Indian character. For the same reason, V. S. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* continues to be a steady seller.

Books published in the United States or in England command more respect and circulation than those published in India. Even established Indian writers like R. K. Narayan, Dom Moraes, R. Prawer Jhabvala, Kamala Markandaya, and M. D. Malgonkar are not so widely read as British or American writers like Lawrence Durrell, J. D. Salinger, Norman Mailer, Mary McCarthy, Saul Bellow, Kingsley Amis, and Iris Murdoch. In 1974 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi read 19 books, all of which were in English. Of these only two were by Indian authors and only one was published in India.

KHUSHWANT SINGH

Italy

Every week the Italian magazine *Panorama* publishes a list of best-sellers, based on reports from a dozen bookshops scattered along the peninsula. Thanks to insistent new marketing methods, many Italians buy their books in railroad stations, at street stalls, or from door-to-door salesmen; so *Panorama*'s classification may not be 100 percent re-

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liable. Still, it is indicative. In past weeks, there has been the predictable mixture: some standard "consumer" novels (by Alberto Bevilacqua and Nantas Salvalaggio), popularizing biography (Roberto Gervaso's *Casanova*) and history (Indro Montanelli's *Giolitti's Italy*), and a few translations (Cornelius Ryan and Pablo Neruda—strange bedfellows).

But since last summer, one presence has been constant on this and similar lists: Elsa Morante's novel *La Storia* ("History"). At latest report, it had sold more than 600,000 copies, and it is on its way to becoming the most-sold Italian book of this century. At first glance, *La Storia* seems an odd candidate for bestsellerdom. It is long (over 700 pages of fine print) and not always easy, but the author's clear intention was to write for the reader-in-the-street. For this reason, she and her publisher, Einaudi, decided to skip a hardcover edition and bring the work out directly in paperback at the accessible price of 2,000 lire (about three dollars, the cost of a first-run movie ticket). Morante's protagonist, the schoolteacher Ida, is seen in the context of contemporary history. A victim of events, she survives the German occupation, a rape, the deportation of the Jews. She is a refugee. One of her sons is first a partisan, then a black-marketeer. History, hers, is not a pageant, but a villain.

It would be wrong to mistake the book—as some critics have—as a return to the post-war *neorealismo,* to the climate of early De Sica and the novels of Giuseppe Berto. Morante has written an epic, crammed with characters, all sharply defined (including two dogs and a splendid cat) and all more important, finally, than the events that shift and shatter them.

Italians may or may not like books (recent statistics say there are 10 million habitual readers), but they dearly love a quarrel, a *polemica,* and nothing is more likely to spark one than sudden success. *La Storia*'s first reviews were ecstatic (critic-novelist Natalia Ginzburg spoke of Dostoevsky); so there was soon a backlash. Some intellectuals decried the whole idea of best-sellers; others accused Morante of sentimentalism. The book does have pages that bring tears, but the author's sentimentality is like Dickens's—a warmth toward life. English-language readers will be able to judge for themselves in a year or so, when the translation (by your reporter) is published by Knopf in the United States and by Collins in Britain.

Another recent literary polemic was also connected with the question of *neorealismo*. And this time the connection seems real. The debate concerns a group of works collectively categorized as *"letteratura selvaggia"* (wild, or outlaw, literature). One of the most-discussed publications in this vein is Dacia Maraini's *Storia di una ladra,* a first-person narration by a woman thief, transcribed over a period of many weeks by Maraini. Another first-person volume is the collection of stories by Vincenzo Guerrazzi, *Le ferie d'un operaio* ("A Worker's Holidays"). For some critics, these (and a few other) books herald a wave of proletarian writing, a new turning. For others, the books are old hat.

But the fad is real. Poet-critic Alfredo Giuliani has already begun a course in "wild literature" at the University of Bologna (Italy's farthest-out seat of higher learning). At a factory in Porto Marghera, a worker—Ferruccio Brugnaro—mimeographs his poems and distributes them at the plant. His poems have been praised by Andrea Zanzotto, a leading Italian poet. And *L'Espresso,* an important Roman weekly, recently dedicated several pages to the whole trend.

Though these literary battles kick up dust, the publishing scene is far from thrilling. As in other Western countries, there is a tendency toward concentration and internationalization. One important old firm, Vallecchi in Florence, was bought several years ago by the vast Montedison conglomerate, which recently, abruptly, closed it down. Giovanni Agnelli, with friends, relatives, and his Fiat power, owns a controlling interest in several publishing houses, including Bompiani (publisher of Moravia) and the elite Adelphi (whose exemplary critical edition of Nietzsche has been bought by a German firm). An Agnelli-controlled company recently acquired a controlling interest in Bantam Books in the United States. And Montedison has a big piece of the Rizzoli operation, which publishes not only books but also periodicals (the Italian *Playboy* for one) and *Il Corriere della sera,* Italy's outstanding daily paper.

Rizzoli is losing money on its periodicals, and so are other firms, notably the vast Mondadori combine. But some of the smaller houses retain their independence and their solvency. Perhaps Einaudi shouldn't be called small (with a turnover of 12 billion lire annually), but it is still run on a personal basis by Giulio Einaudi himself, the friend and publisher of Pavese, Calvino, Morante, and other figures of the post-war generation.

Other even smaller firms are successful, both financially and esthetically. Outstanding is the house of Laterza (in the unlikely city of Bari), founded under the guidance of Benedetto Croce. It has a flourishing series of intellectual paperbacks, rivaling the admirable, scholarly paperbacks of Rizzoli.

Younger readers seem to prefer nonfiction to fiction, and a number of small new firms are bringing out books and pamphlets discussing Italy's present problems. Several publications try to thread a path through the labyrinth of current Italian politics; others discuss the searing questions of abortion, women's lib, penal reform.

In 1972, the last year for which dependable figures exist, Italian publishers brought out 15,749 titles (including many textbooks). There is no reason to believe 1974 produced fewer titles. So the country's 10 million readers have plenty of food for their habit.

WILLIAM WEAVER

Japan

To get an inside view of the state of publishing and reading tastes in modern-day Japan, I talked with an officer of one of the nation's foremost book-

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distributing firms. I met Mr. Yoshizawa, an extremely pleasant gentleman of about 40, at the entrance of the Japan Book Distributing Company (Nippan), an imposing building located in a section of Tokyo called Kanda, a district Japanese students like to compare with the more glamorous Latin Quarter of the Paris Left Bank simply because a host of big universities are crammed into the area. After the inevitable exchange of bows and name cards, we sat down in a coffee shop a few doors from his office. Mr. Yoshizawa, who is in charge of his company's public relations, had been alerted to my visit by a publisher friend of mine, and he was ready with answers to all my questions.

First I asked him to explain the precise nature of his company's activities. Mr. Yoshizawa, coming right to the point, albeit somewhat apologetically, referred to his business as a kind of monopoly. Nippan is, I was told, one of the two largest Japanese firms in this particular business, the other being Tokyo Book Distributing Company (Tōhan), and between the two of them they handle nearly 50 percent of the books and magazines published by the 2,000 established publishers in this country. Upon receiving newly published books from these publishers, Nippan sends them to the more than 10,000 subscribing bookstores scattered throughout the country.

In 1974 Nippan handled books with a total value of 16 billion yen (more than $53 million), ranging from superluxurious art books down to 50-cent paperback novels. "The system, as you see," concluded Mr. Yoshizawa, "is extremely efficient." "And very profitable," I suggested, sensing he wouldn't be offended. He wasn't.

AND HOW ARE BOOKS selling these days? Mr. Yoshizawa said that despite a sharp (30 to 40 percent) increase in the price of books following the "oil shock" (the Japanese-English term for the initial panic of the oil shortage), and despite the general recession, there have been no marked fluctuations in the market. The reason for this is twofold and ironic. First, the "oil shock" led to a paper shortage and a temporary slowdown in the publishing industry. The reading public, in turn, developed a sort of hunger for books; and once books began to appear on the market again, they bought even more than before the shortage. Second, because of the recent chills in our economy, people have been unable to afford such large-scale forms of consumption as traveling, buying land, and building houses, and have turned instead to less expensive pleasures, like reading books. Mr. Yoshizawa chuckled, "Don't you think it's done some good after all? People have given up haunting expensive bars on the Ginza and have begun rediscovering the pleasure of reading. I guess most of the better books they read are about Japanese history." There is, indeed, a big Japanese-history "boom." I find great numbers of books on the subject stacked high in all the bookstores nowadays. A psychologist observed recently that an economic crisis makes people reflective and tends to send them off in search of their identity and cultural roots.

Who buys those expensive art books, which cost more than 100,000 yen ($330)? "Rich people—and people who may not be so rich but who want to keep them until their value increases," Mr. Yoshizawa answered.

There has been a very definite rise, 40 percent according to my informant, in the sale of pocket-size paperbacks since our economy began slowing down last year. Most of the paperbacks still cost less than a dollar (the price of a cup of coffee in Japan), and, as in the United States, their range covers nearly all subjects and authors.

Mr. Yoshizawa's general forecast for the future of Japanese publishing is optimistic. He is convinced that people will keep buying books even if they have to give up buying new clothes. For the Japanese love books, which are still the symbol of their cultural aspirations, and, he feels, this tradition will not disappear easily.

At that point, I thanked my enthusiastic informant, and as we said good-bye in front of the coffee shop, he handed me a booklet that listed the 1974 best-sellers.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the best-seller list in fiction is that Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* stood at the top, having sold more than 1.4 million copies since its publication last summer. Although a great number of Japanese translations of foreign novels, including some very obscure ones, appear each year, they almost never enjoy great popularity. This year the seagull has far outflown Ayako Sono's *The House of Fiction* (second on the list with 600,000 copies), which deals with a disintegrating Japanese family. Of course Bach's book has all the qualifications for becoming a best-seller. It is easy to read and has high-sounding messages rather sentimentally expressed. The success of Bach's novel, however, is due equally to the publisher's wise choice of a translator, Hiroyuki Itsuki, who is himself one of the most popular younger writers in Japan. There are also on the list three stories on the theme of black magic, reflecting perhaps the spiritual insecurity of our people today. But of course one shouldn't forget that this "boom" was mainly inspired by the movie *The Exorcist*, whose most enthusiastic viewers were high-school girls! The novel *The Exorcist* ranks sixth on the list.

AMONG THE BEST-SELLERS in nonfiction, one book has sold more than a million copies. This is a strange item called *The Great Prophecies of Nostradamus*, by Ben Gotō, which purports to be a retelling of, and commentary on, the obscure original, which talked about various disasters. The year before last a science-fiction novel called *The Sinking of Japan* sold more than a million copies. No one here really believes that the end of the world is near, but a sense of impending crisis is widely felt just the same. Perhaps the only book on the nonfiction list that draws our serious attention, however, is a paperback called *Correspondence From Korea*, by T. K. (the initials are presumably to protect the author), published by Iwanami. It tells of the

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enormous difficulties that country is facing at the moment. That this book ranks even seventh from the top shows, let me hope, that some Japanese readers still have a healthy interest in serious matters.

HISAO KANASEKI

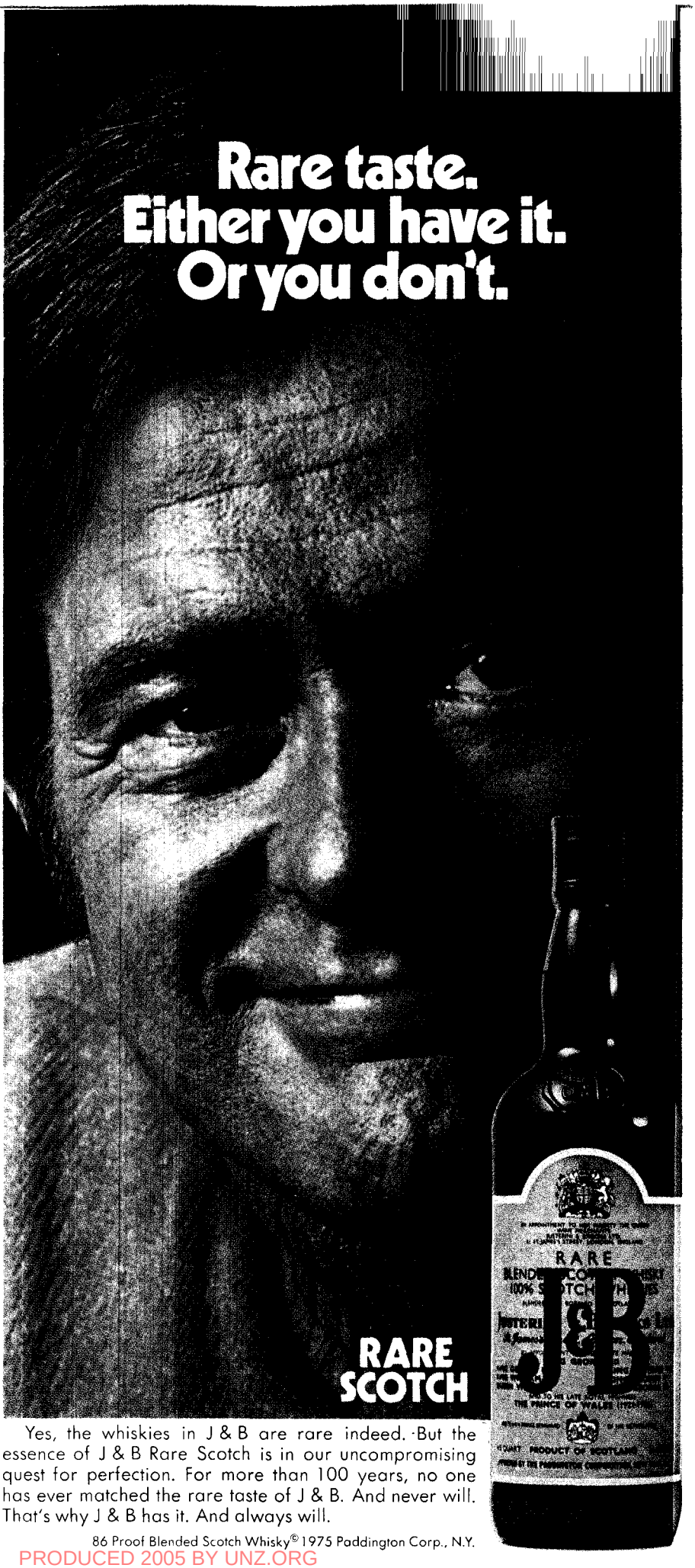
Latin America

About half a century ago, Edmund Wilson decided Spanish literature was too boring. He was by no means alone in his anti-Hispanic feeling, for in the words of the British Hispanist Gerald Brenan, "Spanish literature travels badly."

Today there is no longer a Spanish literature; there are *Hispanic* literatures, that of Spanish America being the more successful in this country. The novelists Jorge Luis Borges, Julio Cortazar, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez and the poets Cesar Vallejo, Pablo Neruda, and Octavio Paz are among today's most widely read foreign writers in the West. In fact, it seems more likely that the new writers from the developed countries will be inspired by Latin American masters than the other way around.

In the last three decades there has been a "boom" in Spanish American literature. (The quotation marks indicate that this is the word being used in the Hispanic world when one refers to the Latin American "new novel" and, more specifically, to a dozen writers.) At its peak, around 1968, "el boom" included, as well as the three novelists mentioned above, the following: the Mexicans Juan Rulfo (*Pedro Paramo*) and Carlos Fuentes (*A Change of Skin*); the Guatemalan Nobel Prize–winner Miguel Angel Asturias (*The Green Pope*); and the Cuban Alejo Carpentier, whose *Lost Steps* was celebrated by J. B. Priestley as "a genuine masterpiece." The Uruguayan Juan Carlos Onetti, probably the finest of this group, is finally given wide recognition after three decades of neglect. He has a single novel translated in the United States, *The Shipyard,* but more are to appear soon.

A group of Cubans, Carpentier included, have become masters in stylistic experimentation. Guillermo Cabrera Infante's *Three Trapped Tigers* shows considerable verbal ingenuity and depicts the rich atmosphere of nightlife in pre-Castro Havana. From an older generation and the timeless Baroque quarters of Havana came, last year, Jose



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Lezama Lima's *Paradise*. It is, to paraphrase Lezama himself, a "Wagnerian novel," a quest for original wisdom that requires a reader at home with Dante. *Tristram Shandy,* and *Ulysses*.

The fact that these Cuban works—including Reinaldo Arenas's *Hallucinations,* a phantasmagoria of the colonial years—seem to project little revolutionary fervor is a tribute to Castro's policy of not demanding strict social realism of his artists.

Peru, once well known for Ciro Alegria's Indianist novels, has now joined "el boom" through the experimental narrative of Mario Vargas Llosa. His most ambitious book, *Conversation in the Cathedral,* has been received here with mixed reviews. He is, in fact, an apocalyptic writer, though not quite in the line of Thomas Pynchon or John Barth. For all his obsession with hermetic forms, particularly his dazzling techniques of fragmented dialogue, he is an impassioned storyteller doggedly committed to revealing the wretched predicament of his countrymen, from the Amazonian Indian to the alienated middle classes of Lima.

Urban alienation is also the preoccupation of a young Argentine, Manuel Puig. *Betrayed by Rita Hayworth,* his first novel, explores the effect of Hollywood films and big stars on provincial people, whose lives are otherwise as flat and desolate as the surrounding pampas. A second novel, *Heartbreak Tango,* though more contrived than the first, confirms Puig's masterful handling of the campy aspects of life (women's fashion magazines in this case) to illustrate the artificiality of language and social *"cursilería"*—poor taste in the guise of sophistication. Behind all the bathos and laughter there is, in both novels, a serious criticism of Argentinian "machismo."

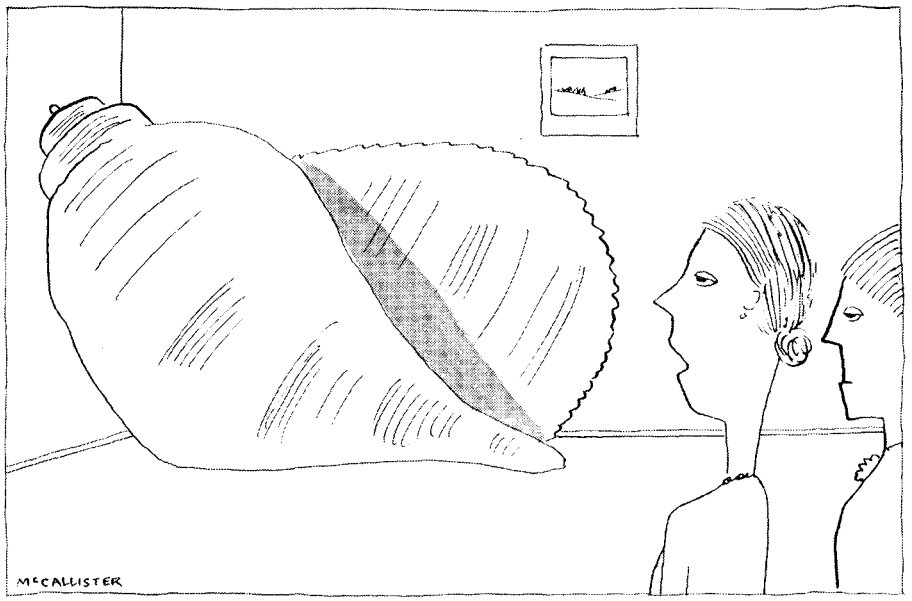
Of the three Spanish American prose writers best known in this country—Borges, Cortazar, and Garcia Marquez—I rate Julio Cortazar as the most important. Borges will always be Borges—a writer's writer whose absence from the Nobel Prize–winners' list is no credit to the Swedish Academy. He has been displacing such old masters as Kafka whenever a point of reference is needed. "Ideas like *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* do not happen to Jorge Luis Borges every week," was the best way a London critic could express his admiration for Tom Stoppard's imaginative play. That was seven years ago; ever since, Borges's short stories (he has never written novels) have been a must in one's literary education. In 1972 appeared what may well be his last collection of short stories, *Doctor Brodie's Report.* Their greater simplicity in both plot and style is partly the result of his almost complete blindness, but it shows also something that is more apparent in his poetry—great warmth and human feeling.

Julio Cortazar—like Borges, an Argentine—also shares with him a common narrative stock, for he started out under his influence with a similar preference for fantasy. There are, however, striking differences: Cortazar soon developed into an exciting, original anti-novelist and a profound prospector of modern man's daily stagnation. His best novel to date, *Hopscotch,* in no time became an underground classic, establishing its translator, Gregory Rabassa [see his report from Brazil on page 19], as the most able renderer of Latin American literature into the English language. A later novel, *62: A Model Kit,* was too much for some of the critics and they took the easy way out—a blasting rejection. Yet this novel, dealing with alienation in love, is an outgrowth of Chapter 62 of *Hopscotch.* Just as Borges is an old blunderbuss threatening cosmic and metaphysical orders, Cortazar always acts as a young anarchist who uses poetic terrorism to demolish what he calls *"la gran costumbre"*—routine and docile acceptance of appearances. He is the man likely to pull the magic switch that will, for example, make Queen Victoria the monster, while Jack the Ripper is recast as a knight-errant tilting against the dragon of puritanism.

The Colombian Garcia Marquez is probably the member of "el boom" who enjoys the widest readership and has contributed the most to the financial boom of his publishers—with an unprecedented 750,000 copies of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* sold in the Spanish original. He is a stupendous storyteller of Rabelaisian gusto who restores novel-writing to much of its old powers. What many critics pedestrianly saw as Garcia Marquez's "magic realism," his translator, Rabassa, incisively defines as the rescuing of the Oriental Grail of storytelling.

Impressive as this list of accomplished writers may seem, it is, however, only the tip of the iceberg. There are virtually dozens of good novelists, young and old, who have been left out of the cozy benefits enjoyed by the members of "el boom." Some, such as the Ecuadoran Aguilera Malta and the Argentinean Hector Libertella, will soon find their names in our book reviews. But many others will be admired by only a few thousand readers scattered throughout the Hispanic world. To mention some: the Mexicans del Paso, Manjarez, and Chacon; the Colombians Alvarez Gardeazabal and Espinosa; the Chileans Droguett and Skarmetta; the Argentineans Conti, Leopoldo Garcia, and Di Benedetto; the Uruguayans Ainsa and Pieri Rossi; and so on.

Then there are the poets and essayists. All that poetic galaxy stretching from



"Albert crawls into his shell following the six o'clock news."

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the avant-garde Vicente Huidobro to Pablo Neruda and Cesar Vallejo, from Borges to Octavio Paz, and on to young petrels who cultivate classic forms, such as the Mexican Jose Emilio Pacheco, or venture in experimentations, as the Argentine Dario Canton. Without them to lead the way, remolding the language in the process, Latin American novelists would probably still be trying to overcome the confinements of social realism and exotic "*costumbrismo*." Instead they have gone forth to learn from Proust, Joyce, Faulkner, and Dos Passos that which best suits their novelistic needs.

Thus, at the time when most Western literatures have given up on the novel as a genre and as a mirror of man's problems, hopes, and fears, Spanish American novelists are playing for high stakes, seeking to satisfy nothing less than the human hungering for authenticity. Solzhenitsyn calls it "art–for man's sake."

LUIS A. DIEZ

Nigeria

In a paper read recently at the Iowa University Writers' Workshop, the Nigerian author Kole Omotoso has assailed "the older generation" of his fellow writers for publishing their works abroad. His whole argument rests on the assumption that overseas publication equals inauthenticity; the argument is made with spirit and aggression but fails to carry complete conviction. To begin with, he overstates the treason committed by this generation of Nigerians, since many of them did in fact first publish with the indigenous Mbari House in Ibadan. Such now well-known names as Christopher Okigbo, J. P. Clark, and Wole Soyinka published early volumes with Mbari as well as shorter pieces in the pioneer literary journal *Black Orpheus*. Another writer of that generation, Cyprian Ekwensi, began with short stories in local newspapers and a romantic novelette called *When Love Whispers*, which was published in that fountainhead of penny dreadfuls and Gothic-style romances, the Onitsha Market. Considering the overall educational and literary scene in Nigeria before 1962, the remarkable thing is that so much outstanding work was then published there.

Nevertheless, it remains true that most of these works, whether they first came to light in Nigeria or in London, were slanted toward a sophisticated readership. The authors were to some extent (Ekwensi is an obvious exception) proving themselves by the criteria of the literature, English or classical, that they had studied at the university. Omotoso is certainly right in drawing attention to a change of emphasis and direction in recent Nigerian writing, of which his own short-story collection *Miracles* (1973) is a good example. *Miracles* is billed as one of a series of collections to be published in Ibadan by the Onibonojè Press. This press is a well-established family business that recently launched a local book club and immediately attracted over 7,000 subscribers. In style and presentation *Miracles* is clearly aimed at the sort of readership that has hitherto been content with Onitsha novelettes and the stories in *Drum* or other popular magazines–a readership that has generally found a Chinua Achebe novel, a Soyinka play, or an Okigbo poetry sequence rather too high a leap from *The Loves of Lucy* or *Rosemary and the Taxidriver*. Omotoso's simple narratives offer no excursions into the past, into the inner consciousness of the hero, or into visionary fulfillment. They are stories very much of the here and now, stories that seem likely to put the aspiring reader at ease right away: "Mother's buka began to fill up usually after the seven o'clock news. Angry and powerless, I took my plates to the washbasin and ran water on them. . . ."

The initiative of Omotoso and the Onibonojè Press was to some extent anticipated in Eastern Nigeria, where, in the wake of the civil war, a number of local publishing ventures sprang to life. A fine collection of wartime stories, mostly by new writers, appeared in Enugu in 1971. This was *The Insider*, published by Nwankwo-Ifejika. The same house also produced Achebe's first volume of poetry, *Beware, Soul Brother*, while his own new journal, *Okike*, also began to feature important work in poetry and fiction. Over in the Midwest Region, a parallel venture sprang up in the Ethiope Press, which promises, among other things, a collected volume of Gabriel Okara's verse.

All these developments, falling within the first three years after the havoc of war, suggest not only renewed vitality in Nigerian writing but also a new determination to address and build upon a local readership that extends beyond the university and the classroom. Overseas publication, if it follows, will then be an extension of a local literary reputation, rather than an imposition upon it by outside opinion and so-called metropolitan approval. The effects of such a shift of emphasis upon literary form, style, and choice of language are likely to be profound. Perhaps an early pointer in this direction was an itinerant performing group called Theatre Express, which, in the years just before the civil war of 1966–70, began to tour Nigerian towns and villages with a mixed program of racy Pidgin-English playlets, recited poetry, storytelling, and music. Poetry performed in this sort of popular atmosphere, often with an accompaniment of rattles, drums, or flutes, is something very different from the rather academic verses, heavily influenced by Eliot, Yeats, Hopkins, and Pound, that began to emerge in the universities in the late Fifties. The very form of some of this early work, as well as its presentation and price, had an inhibiting effect on local readers accustomed to much simpler and briefer fare. A different performing situation for poetry and drama, a different readership for fiction, and a different, more immediate critical response for the writer must work a transformation of the Nigerian literary scene in the next few years. If, in the process, that literature becomes less accessible to the overseas reader, that seems a small price to pay for achieving a more significant audience at home.

GERALD MOORE

The Soviet Union

In a way, the Soviet literary scene suffered a loss in the past year even greater than the exile of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Last October, at the age of 45, Vassily Shukshin dropped dead of a heart attack. Vassily Shukshin? Although Shukshin is regarded by many among Moscow's intelligentsia as one of the best modern Russian writers, his name is virtually unknown in the West.

It is perhaps unfair to compare the costs of death and of exile. But Solzhenitsyn, after all, goes on writing. And Shukshin's work–novels, short stories, and films (where he also acted and directed brilliantly)–is abruptly ended.

Most Russians will probably never see what the growing colony of émigré authors turn out in distant havens. The new quarterly *Kontinent*–produced in West Germany and featuring, along with Solzhenitsyn, authors like Andrei

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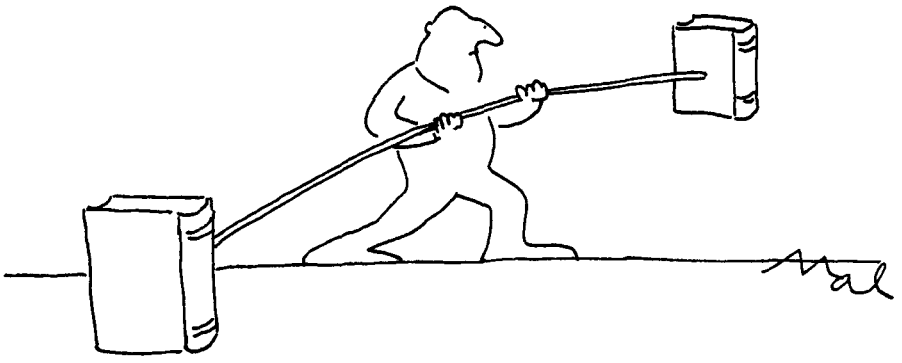
Sinyavsky and the poet Joseph Brodsky—is circulated in the *samizdat* underground but still reaches only a few thousand readers. Many young Russians revere Brodsky as they once idolized Yevgeny Yevtushenko, yet they dare not keep his poetry at home. And in case after case, mere possession of Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* has meant trouble with the KGB.

Shukshin, on the other hand, can be read openly in mass-circulation journals like *Novy Mir,* where officially approved fiction is published. To Russians who cannot imagine abandoning their homeland, no matter how much they wish it would change, Shukshin served a particularly important purpose: He showed that genuine creativity can survive even the strict limitations set by Kremlin cultural policies.

Lately, Shukshin has set the standard, but there are other talented writers in the



Soviet Union today whose work is also ignored abroad. Fazil Iskander, Fyodor Abramov, and Valentin Rasputin write poignantly about the countryside, capturing the flavor of changing ways. Vasil Bykov explores the dilemmas of stress for men in war in a manner that contemporary readers understand. And poet David Samoilov has amassed a considerable following with his lyrical verse in classical styles.

Most recently, a writer named Vladimir Bogomolov has had a substantial success with a novel called *In August 1944,* which describes a counter-espionage operation to locate an enemy radio station operating behind Soviet lines on the Polish front. World War II stories are the cliché of latter-day Russian prose, but this book's psychological tensions have set it apart. If Communists went in for such things, Bogomolov's book would be a best-seller.

There is a misleading Western tendency, it often seems, to define current Soviet literature by what is suppressed rather than by what is published. It is difficult for us to see integrity in these authors who struggle within the system. Dissent, in our tradition, is the honored way.

Vassily Shukshin, however, was no dissident. He was even a member of the Communist Party. Nonetheless, he conveyed a depth of spirit that defied restraints necessary for political and social acceptability. His credible accounts of life and his existential characters—a solitary laborer intent on designing a perpetual-motion machine, a simpleton unable to convince fellow villagers that he has a perfect plan for government—evidently speak to broad segments of the Soviet people. Shukshin's film *Kalina Krasnaya* (*"The Red Snow Ball Tree"*), which portrays the violent death of a melancholy ex-convict at the end of an odyssey in search of personal peace, opened months ago and still draws large and admiring audiences of intellectuals and workers alike. Final approval for this unusual movie, it is said, came from a member of the ruling politburo.

If anything, Shukshin's death has only enhanced his popularity. A rumor recently that a long-awaited Shukshin novel would at last be going on sale attracted a crowd of hundreds to Moscow's biggest bookstore. To discourage others from joining the lengthy line, people would not tell passers-by what they were waiting for. Instead, they coyly insisted they just wanted "to see what there is." Any worthwhile new book disappears quickly here, but everyone knew that Shukshin's would be gone in hours.

This apparently last novel is called *Stepin Razin* and tells of a seventeenth-century cossack and folk hero who led a peasant revolt that succeeded in seizing large territories of southeast Russia. He was eventually defeated and died on the wheel in Moscow.

The long delay before publication presumably means that *Stepin Razin* suffered from censors' scrutiny. But it would be wrong to dwell now on Shukshin's compromises—if there were any. He succeeded where others could not in writing convincingly about Russia—for Russians—and at the same time subtly enough so authorities could permit the challenge.

As for *samizdat*, the hand-copied or typewritten manuscripts that form the library of forbidden literature, an important change has taken place over the past year or so. Increasingly, work is being sent out of the country, where émigrés and their friends find outlets for getting the best of it published, often in Russian. These books are then smuggled back, and Russians pass around the finished products rather than the hard-to-read onionskins that used to be common. That, in a sense, is progress.

The hottest item of the season was undoubtedly *Kontinent* because so many leading Russian authors are represented. Interestingly, however, some Muscovites who saw a copy of the first issue were disappointed. They found that despite some superb pieces—by Brodsky and Sinyavsky in particular—the overall tone was tendentious and illiberal.

There is enough of that, one young intellectual said, in official Russian literature.

PETER OSNOS

West Germany

For sheer cheerfulness and optimism, one might compare the current West German publishing scene to, say, the scene in which Charles Dickens describes the death of Little Nell. To sum it up briefly, publishing there is in the midst of its grimmest crisis since 1945.

Rising paper costs struck publishers with the impact and suddenness of an explosion; they found themselves confronted with markups on paper ranging from 35 to 80 percent. During 1973 more West German bookshops went out of business than in any year since 1945; last year proved a trifle less bleak, but according to predictions 1975 will set an even worse record. The year's biggest sensation was the bankruptcy of West Germany's biggest book wholesaler, Cologne's Wengenroth. All publishers have lost money, and small publishers of *belles lettres* are considered doomed.

One wonders who can afford to buy books at current prices. Ten years ago

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the average hardcover novel cost three to four dollars (12 to 16 marks at the old exchange rate), and as prices crept upward, publishers referred to 30 marks ($7.50) as "the sound barrier" they dreaded crossing. Today the German translations of James Michener's *Centennial* and Thornton Wilder's *Theophilus North* sell for 38 and 32 marks respectively—but the upward revaluation of the mark makes them even more expensive in dollars: about $16 and $13.50. The greater the avoirdupois, of course, the greater the price. Such doorstop books as Vladimir Nabokov's *Ada* and David Halberstam's *The Best and the Brightest* have left that sound barrier far behind and retail for 48 marks. Publishers who have announced forthcoming books at 30 marks have often found themselves forced, by publication time, to hike that to 36 or 38 marks. Prices rose also on about 80 percent of the books already in the shops—just as at the A&P.

The first big wave of higher prices struck last autumn, but its inevitable influence appears on everyone's 1975 list. The Rowohlt Verlag, one of Germany's biggest houses, brought out 35 hardcover books in 1974; this year it will reduce that number to 20 or 25 and cut its line of paperback originals by 50 percent. Another major house, the S. Fischer Verlag, using the nervous euphemism "slimming," has let several editors go. Retrenchment has also hit the publishing field's periphery hard. Many newspapers, their advertising revenue diminished, have cut their budgets for covering the arts, which means cutting down on book reviews.

West German booksellers think not in terms of fiction and nonfiction, but of nonfiction and *Belletristik*, the latter lumping together fiction, memoirs, and so on. *Gulag* led 1974's nonfiction bestsellers, with Joachim Fest's Hitler biography second. Third came a book about yoga—yes, yoga. Horst Eberhard Richter, a Giessen psychoanalyst, placed fourth with *Lernziel Solidarität*, a study of male and female roles in contemporary West German society. Cashing in on *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*'s big German success, Dee Brown's publisher dusted off and translated his 1967 book about Wild West women, *The Gentle Tamers*, and retitled it *Gunsmoke Was Their Perfume*; it finished fifth in the 1974 running.

The top *Belletristik* items included Morris L. West's *The Salamander*, German-born actress Lilli Palmer's memoirs, and Robert Crichton's novel *The Camerons*. Johannes Mario Simmel, whom one might describe as West Germany's Kathleen Norris, came in fourth with *Only the Wind Knows the Answer*, the latest installment in his chronicles of the lives and loves of the contemporary West German money elite and their diversions in fashionable locations such as the Côte d'Azur. Simmel's books remain almost totally unknown outside Western Europe, but in Germany they sell like *Pfannkuchen* and have made him a rich man. Serious literature made it only to fifth place, with Heinrich Böll's short novel *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*, a fictionalized version of the Springer newspapers' near-lynch campaign against the Baader-Meinhof urban guerrillas. A liberal Catholic and Germany's only living Nobel literary laureate, Böll has long served a useful public function by defending the rights of various persons under attack from the right-wing Establishment. This latest book sold 180,000 copies last year—heartening to liberal humanists, but hardly typical.

"Good" literature also took sixth place, with Siegfried Lenz's novel *Das Vorbild*. Lenz, just old enough to have served as a *Fähnleinführer* (group leader) in the Hitler Youth, writes about the moral burden of his generation. The novel evolves out of a meeting of three contemporary schoolteachers who come together to plan a course of study but get started talking about the past.

The very idea of books printed on newsprint at first sends a shudder through German readers, evoking the grim days right after the last war when Rowohlt launched its *rororo* line of paperbacks using newsprint, because at that time it couldn't get anything else Germans could afford to buy. Nevertheless, this year Frankfurt's respected Suhrkamp Verlag will launch the *Suhrkamp Literatur Zeitung*—books printed in newspaper format and sold by subscription, primarily to pre-college young people, at about a dollar a copy. The *SLZ* will contain unabridged texts from Suhrkamp's backlist, along with illustrations and discussion material. The series will begin with Hermann Hesse's *Steppenwolf* in a promised edition of 50,000; other authors will include Bertolt Brecht, Peter Handke, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Max Frisch, with a further volume bringing together Goethe and a gifted young East German playwright, Ulrich Plenzdorf.

Did West German publishing in 1974 offer *anything* of a really sanguine nature? To some extent, yes, though often indirectly and only as a result of some negative development. Good paperbacks enjoyed their biggest sales since the war—hardly surprising, when you think of paying almost $20 for a hardcover copy of *Ada*. A Gallup-like organization ascertained that among book-buyers the proportions have remained constant: one-third of the population buy books; another third own, receive, and read books, usually gifts; and the remaining third have no contact with books at all.

For the first time in years, West German bookshops had sufficient young job applicants who wanted to learn the trade; the biggest Frankfurt shop had not had one such applicant for five years. But even this boon got blown in by an ill wind. It has become so difficult for students to get into universities that some have decided to while away the waiting time by learning the book business.

Paul Moor

About the Authors

Gregory Rabassa teaches at Queens College and translates many leading Latin American writers into English. **Joe C. Huang** teaches at College of the Holy Cross and is the author of *Heroes and Villains in Communist China: The Contemporary Chinese Novel as a Reflection of Life*. **Roy McMullen** is a Paris-based writer whose most recent book is *Victorian Outsider*, a biography of Whistler. **John Walker** covers British theater for the *International Herald Tribune* and is feature editor of *The Observer*. **Paul Lendvai** reports on Eastern Europe for the *Financial Times* of London. **Khushwant Singh** is editor of *Illustrated Weekly of India*. **William Weaver** is an Italian-based critic and award-winning translator. **Hisao Kanaseki** teaches English literature at Tokyo Metropolitan University. **Luis A. Diez** teaches Latin American literature at Queens College. **Gerald Moore** is professor of African and Asian studies at the University of Sussex. **Peter Osnos** covers the Soviet Union for the *Washington Post*. **Paul Moor** is a Berlin-based cultural reporter for *The Times* of London and the *International Herald Tribune*.

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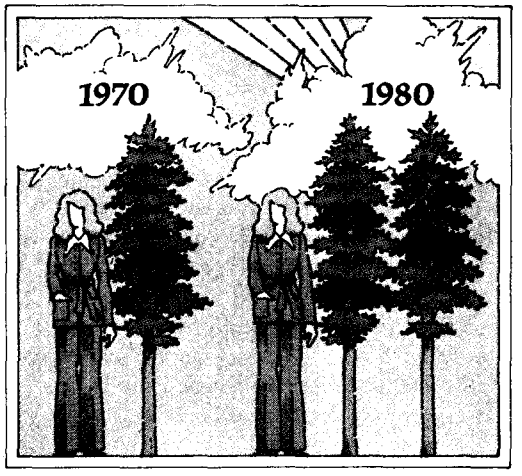

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Trade Winds

by William Cole

Not Easy

Maura Stanton's poems are not easy. She's the winner (out of 600 submissions) of the 1974 Yale Series of Younger Poets competition, for *Snow on Snow* (Yale University Press, $6.00 cloth, $1.95 paper). Stanley Kunitz, who judged, notes in his foreword that her poetry is not easy to define. "And if you were to beg her to describe the reality extrapolated in her metaphors she would have to tell you that what she sees as metaphor is what she knows as real." What *I* say is let the poems wash over you and you'll come up with something of value. Miss Stanton is 27 and teaches at the University of Richmond. Here's "Mykonos":

Houses knuckle from soil
in this immense light called classic:
I think of women in stone clothes.
Wind goes mad in the usual olive trees.
Goat skull on the path. Whole herds
of goat are moving on small hoofs
under my closed lids until I am black
with history. All beans and executions.
I want to be perfect, frozen
over a broken sandal; my hand
to pluck, nervous, at a strap forever,
narrow pleats flowing like rain
from a slim neck. Of course no head.
All the space behind my eyes shot off.
Tourists would say I screamed
for my lost face. A bird flicks up.
The skin on these white grapes
is tight as fingertips. The sea
flecked with shrapnel. Everything ends
in detail, chips of marble, bone, brain
cells with whole wars in their chemicals.

Whoops!

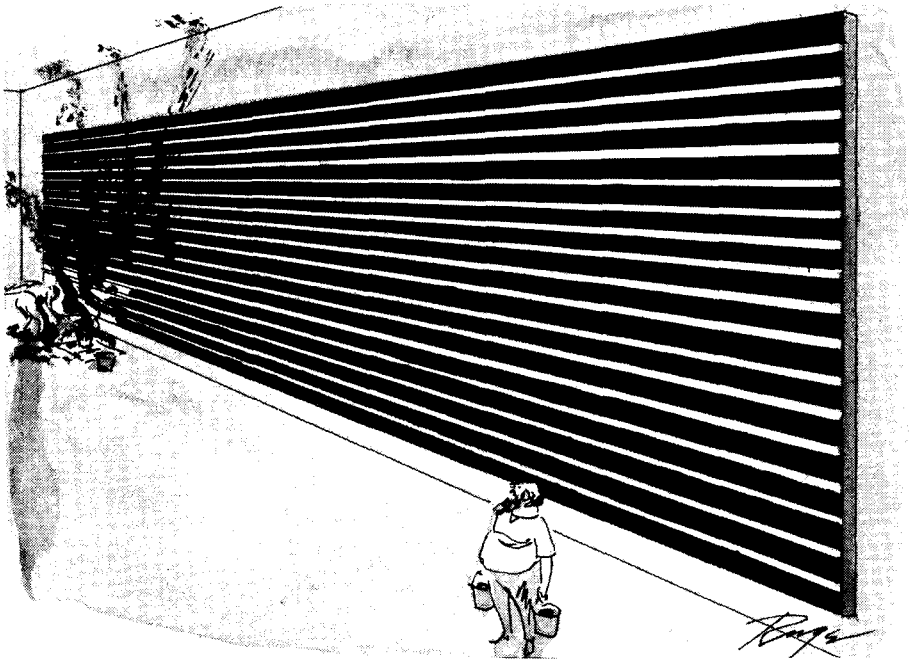
Oh, she's got a wicked tongue on her, that Helen Lawrenson! Reading her snappy *Stranger at the Party: A Memoir* (Random House, April 21, $7.95), I paused midway and said to myself, "By God! This is fun!" And it is—rambunctious, intelligent, iconoclastic, and funny. Not to mention sexy. How about, as a young girl reporter in Syracuse in the Twenties, going to interview the most eminent religious man in America, Rabbi Stephen Wise? "I naïvely started by telling him that my friend and I had gone to the Free Synagogue to hear him and how much we had admired him. The next thing I knew, he had toppled me backward on the sofa and was making love to me, my hat knocked askew, and *with my gloves on.*" Years later, on *Vanity Fair*, she was sent to arrange a photo session with the same man, and " . . . whoops! there I was on my back again, this time on the long table in his office, with Wise reciting in Hebrew, 'Lift up your head, oh ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.' " Lots of fascinating gossip about Clare Boothe Luce, Condé Nast, Bernard Baruch, Grace Moore, and all the figures of the Twenties and Thirties. Her vocabulary? Take *fossicking about, apodictic*, and *phillilloo* for three. Here's a mini-essay on conversationalists:

I think that in the long run most brilliant conversationalists are boring if you spend much time with them. They tend to be always "on," with no respite from their anecdotes (was it about Bonar Law or Lord Birkenhead that one or the other said, "Yes, his conversation is brilliant, but it lacks the proper terminus facilities"?), like David Niven today or Alexander King, when he was alive. King, who did a piece or two for *Vanity Fair*, although he was never on the staff, as he later claimed, was an exuberant, verbose little man who was not the best raconteur of his time but was indisputably the most persistent, to the point where, frankly, when we saw him coming, we would groan, "Oh God, look who's here!"

The Maine Thing

Who writes good comedy today? Not many: Peter De Vries, Richard Bissell, Woody Allen. And don't forget John Gould, whose fifteenth book of crackly Maine humor, *Glass Eyes by the Bottle*, comes out from Little Brown on April 29 at $6.95. It consists of 45 "conversation pieces": farmers and fishermen, cookstoves, churning butter, characters, cow "flaps"—as he calls them. Phrases like ". . . came to town with a workhorse that was five times too big for the buggy. The shaves always pinched the horse on the rump so he went along with an expression of wonderment." And there was the time when they used to pack fermenting sweet corn kernels in 40-pound milk cans for shipment:

Our only problem was to get the kernels to Portland before the juices fermented and the cans blew up. We never had any blow up. But every cover was whacked home hard with a wooden hammer before a truck pulled out, and by the time the truck got to Portland every can was a loaded bomb. And that's why I had to hire an outfielder. The gas inside built up a lot of pressure. We couldn't open the cans inside the plant, or we'd have blown our roof to pieces. So we did it out on the platform. A man would hit up under the covers with a mallet, the gas would let go, and the cover would shoot a hundred feet in the air, with a noise that made packing corn sound like the battle of Gettysburg. We couldn't let the covers come down and get rimwracked on the cement, so I hired this man to chase around and catch the covers when they came down. That was his job, and that's all he had to do. Once in a great while he'd miss one, and when it clanged on the cement everybody in the plant would look up and smile. □



"Gesundheit!"

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artsletter

Prepared in cooperation
with the National Society of Literature
and the Arts.

THE RIGHT MAN TO SEE. When Nancy Hanks, chairwoman of the National Council on the Arts, heard that the President's budget advisers had cut about $8 million from the slim budget of the National Endowment for the Arts, the operative agency she also heads, she went straight to the top. She went to see President Ford and got her way. Now, $8 million is peanuts among Washington budgets, but it was 10 percent of Nancy's. Moreover, much of it had already been allocated and, indeed, some already spent when the blow fell. The council consists of 26 presidentially appointed members who act as an advisory body to the National Endowment for the Arts. It's good to know the man in the White House when budget time comes . . .

METROPOLITAN PACKS THEM IN. According to an opinion survey conducted last year by researchers Daniel Yankelovich, Inc., New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art has become the city's No. 1 tourist attraction. As if to underline this finding, the museum announced that its recent 10-week exhibition on "The Impressionist Epoch" drew 518,809 persons -- an all-time record. Since most of those who attended gave the suggested $1.00 contribution at the entrance doors and, in addition, bought $250,000 worth of catalogues and other graphics related to the show, the museum's coffers have swelled appreciably. But many who came, paid, and stood in line to see this collection imported from France (it was originally shown at the Grand Palais in Paris last autumn) were disheartened at the crowded viewing conditions. It's hard to savor the serene tranquility of a Monet when you're being jostled along by hordes of other viewers.

Despite additional funds generated by "The Impressionist Epoch" and other popular special exhibits, the Metropolitan Museum still operates at a substantial deficit -- so much so, in fact, that the museum has had to curtail another show imported from Paris. This one, entitled "French Painting from 1774 to 1830: Age of Revolution," was originally to have included 206 pictures by Fragonard, David, Ingres, Corot, Delacroix, Géricault, and many minor masters of the period whose works have never before been displayed in America. However, in order to save on shipping and insurance costs, the exhibition has been cut down to about 150 pictures -- which is still quite a lot. Robert Rosenblum, professor of fine arts at New York University and one of the show's organizers, objects, saying that "what was intended as a major vehicle for a museum to promote the highest standards of innovative art history has now been reduced to a Reader's Digest version of the original." Thomas P. F. Hoving, the Metropolitan's director, sympathizes but insists that "stark fiscal reality" necessitated the curtailment.

"French Painting from 1774 to 1830" opens at the Metropolitan on June 13. Meanwhile, the show is on view at the Detroit Institute of Arts, which is co-sponsoring the exhibition in this country.

LIBRARY DUES. British authors will soon be reimbursed from treasury coffers for books borrowed through public libraries. Before the legislation can be passed, however, Arts Minister Hugh Jenkins must first arbitrate between two groups haggling over methods of payment. One camp -- primarily librarians and reference-book authors -- wants a once-only payment proportionate to the price of the book. Novelists, on the other hand, want to be paid according to popularity and insist on hearing the jingle of about a cent each time a book is borrowed.

Authors are also pushing Jenkins to include a provision in the measure for payments between nations. West Germany, the only country that has Public Lending

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Rights as statutory law, has already agreed to pay other nationals. But Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Australia, and New Zealand -- countries that bestow payments without legislation -- restrict fiscal arrangements to their homelands. "We would prefer our government to protect us from being robbed in the antipodes," said author Brigid Brophy, who has spearheaded a group of 600 authors -- including Graham Greene and Iris Murdoch -- to lobby for the legislation.

In 1973 Rep. Ogden Reid proposed similar library-book legislation (HR 4850) for American authors. The bill was referred to committee where, a spokeswoman for the American Library Association said, it promptly died. But the Authors League lawyer in New York City begged to differ. He insists that the movement is alive and kicking -- and only waiting to be re-introduced to the Ninety-fourth Congress.

HOMAGE TO ORFF. Though he enjoys little esteem with contemporary critics, composers, or musicologists, Carl Orff stands high with those who count even more -- music lovers and the public generally. This year's Salzburg Festival will be preceded by a symposium (June 24-29) in the Mozarteum, honoring the eightieth anniversary of the composer of Carmina Burana, born July 10, 1895.

UNESCO CONTROVERSY RAGES. Ever since a majority vote at UNESCO's general conference last November cut off cultural aid to Israel and denied that country membership in any regional grouping, protests have been flying thick and fast at the Paris headquarters of the organization. Among the early protesters was no less a personage than the late Sir Julian Huxley, UNESCO's first director general. Now a group of influential American writers and performers -- including NSLA board member James Michener, composer-conductor Leonard Bernstein, and playwright Arthur Miller -- has joined the fray. In a letter to John E. Fobes, UNESCO's American deputy director general, the group said: "As members of and contributors to the international cultural community, we cannot be silent in the face of the blatant subversion of UNESCO's principles and purposes by politically motivated resolutions aimed at transforming Israel into a veritable pariah in the world community." Pending a change of heart among UNESCO's member states, the signatories said they would refuse to cooperate with UNESCO and urged their colleagues in other countries to boycott the organization.

One American who has refused to join the boycott is the violinist Yehudi Menuhin, who is calling for a "broader attitude" from the intellectual and artistic community. Such an attitude, he says, is "essential if Jewish people everywhere, and Israelis in particular, are to command international support and sympathy, which is now at a low ebb."

Meanwhile, as the UNESCO controversy continues to simmer, certain well-placed observers have been heard to express doubts about the overall value and efficacy of the organization itself. Nobody denies that UNESCO has made some important contributions in the educational, scientific, and cultural areas during its 30 years of existence. But there are some who contend that today it is a vastly overmanned and inbred bureaucracy -- "an army of dull-witted functionaries," according to one informant, "who exist chiefly to make work for other dull-witted functionaries."

VOICE IN THE CABINET. Although Britain has an arts minister (at present, Hugh Jenkins) he does not enjoy Cabinet rank. As a result, says The Economist magazine, "we spend more on cheese subsidies than we do on the Arts Council. . . . What the arts need if they are not to flounder in times of economic hardship is a voice in the Cabinet." To which NSLA says, "Hear, hear." The NSLA is now actively working for the creation of a Secretary of the Arts post in President Ford's administration.

ARTSLETTER is prepared in cooperation with the National Society of Literature and the Arts, Suite 302, 1424 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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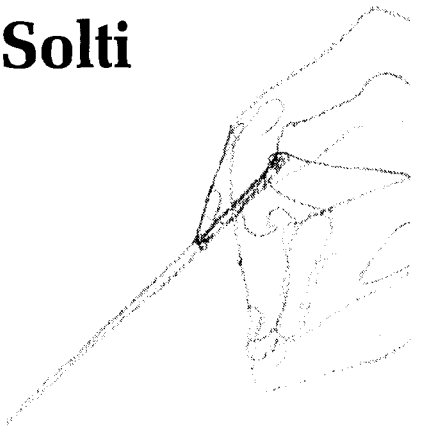
The Americanization of Sir Georg Solti



by Robert C. Marsh

Georg Solti has been turning up in American musical life for 22 years. He made his North American debut with the San Francisco Opera in 1953 and first visited Chicago (at Ravinia) the next year. The New York Philharmonic saw him shortly thereafter, and for two years (1956–57) he was the dominant conductor of the Chicago Lyric Opera. His Metropolitan Opera debut dates to 1960, and he was there, off and on, during the next five seasons. But these were all guest engagements, with no strings attached.

Even when Solti came to the Chicago Symphony, in 1969, it was as a commuter to an interesting American job: In his basic way of life, he remained a European, living among other Europeans. For a Hungarian musician, tempered by wartime exile in Switzerland, and having matured in post-war German opera houses, it seemed the best of all possible arrangements.

During his first Chicago season, he told a European press conference how it was all going to go. His year would be divided into four three-month segments. Chicago would have one of them, and its orchestra was to be his preferred vehicle for touring and recording. London, the city he then regarded as home, would have three more months, to be shared by the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, which he had headed through the Sixties, and the London Philharmonic, which welcomed him as a guest conductor. Paris would have another three months. The final quarter of the year was to go to Roccamare, an Italian seaside resort near Rome, where he would spend the summer weeks with his family, recovering from one season and preparing for another.

Robert C. Marsh, music critic of the Chicago Sun-Times, *is also author of* Toscanini and the Art of Orchestral Conducting.

It was a great idea, but it never worked. The appeal of Paris, for example, was a seductive one, with opportunities in both orchestral concerts and opera. L'Orchestre de Paris was young and talented, but it was also unseasoned and French. Charles Münch, who was to have auditioned the musicians and trained the ensemble, died before completing the job, leaving the orchestra half-hatched. Herbert von Karajan, who succeeded him, found that the needs of the orchestra could not be fitted into his crowded schedule.

For Solti, it was a chance to succeed where his great rival, Karajan, had, at least, been unable to secure a clear triumph. There were further inducements, such as the projected Palais du Congrès, which would give the orchestra a permanent home. Like a young man in love with a Parisian charmer, who sees only her beauty and vivacity and only too late realizes what their domestic arrangements would entail, Solti succumbed.

To live in Paris was one thing; to work there was another. At the Opéra in 1973, Solti gave his audiences phenomenal realizations of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* and Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*. But to visit the rehearsals for the Schoenberg score was to encounter a very different Solti from one ever seen in Chicago. He was a man struggling against stupidity and indifference to his artistic goals, a raw-nerved, screaming Solti radiating anxiety rather than the affection and trust that had glowed from his face in Chicago.

Even this was preferable to the Solti I met a few months later, rehearsing the Beethoven Ninth in the historic Théâtre des Champs-Elysées: a man weary, depressed, sustained by repressed fury for the insensitivity and musical ineptitude of the singers he was trying to prepare. The essence of the man is total commitment to music: The insubordination, the militant egocentrism of French musicians, which prevented them from freely working together for a common objective, was deadly in its effect on his spirit.

"In Chicago," he observed, "I can be away for months, and the day I return we begin as if I had never been away. But in Paris it may take two weeks to become accustomed to each other again." Clearly this part of the projected arrangement for a year of four parts wasn't working. After a schedule of concerts in July, Solti will turn the Orchestre de Paris over to Daniel Barenboim, who, it is hoped, can give it the time it requires.

WHEN SOLTI CAME to Chicago as resident conductor of the Symphony, he really did not know or especially like the city. His heavy work load prevented him from doing very much to improve that situation. If he needed a new shirt, he would ask a friend where one of the desired type might be found, and a servant was dispatched to go and buy it. More recently, he has found time for shopping, for a walk in good weather. Lady Solti, a former British television personality, probably knows every art gallery in town. Certainly she knows every museum. Now the problem is maintaining privacy (Solti, offstage, is a very private man): retaining the necessary time to study, to rest, and to enjoy the company of his family. Unlike his great predecessor Fritz Reiner, who would never attend a public function (least of all a fund-raising event), Solti feels it part of his obligation to meet

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trustees and contributors; his good nature and accessibility may, indeed, be abused by some wealthy patrons.

Basically, then, Solti has faced up to one of the paradoxes of his career. He has been preoccupied by concern with overexposure, insufficiently concerned with the danger of overextending himself. He likes to think of himself as being at the energy level of 20 years ago, an iron man of boundless stamina and psychic reserve, and, in consequence, he has tended to overbook his schedule. It has not been a pleasant way to live, especially as his cities of principal concern—Paris and Chicago—tended to emphasize his periods of absence rather than his periods of residence. "Wherever I go," he protests with a gesture of resignation, "everyone tells me the same thing —that I am not enough here!"

To be greeted endlessly with this chorus when poisoned by fatigue, or nursing an interminable English cold, seemed too much.

With his sixty-third birthday impending (October 12), Solti has agreed that he must "accept his limitations," must realize that to respect his own human limits is to respect himself. He sees the solution to his own personal energy crisis (he comes off the stage limp with exhaustion after every concert) as staying in one place and pouring his best into one job. That means Chicago. "I realize," he says, "that with *this* orchestra, the only real artistic limitations are those of my own imagination."

Now Solti has accepted the fact that

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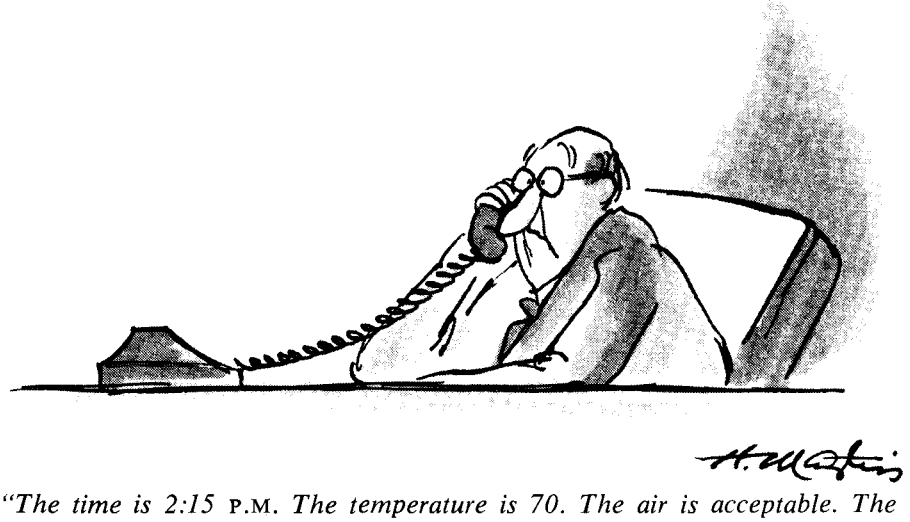
he is a musician first and a European second, and that everything he has wanted in music Chicago has given him as an act of love. Relaxed and glowing, he will say: "I have never been so happy in my whole life. . . . I will never have a better orchestra—never. I have never had such rapport. And never such a result. And this is growing, still growing. We understand each other better, and I think we play each season better—for all sorts of reasons. They know my style, and I know their possibilities, which are practically limitless. So I know how far I can go. If you dare to ask for effects which you wouldn't dare ask from any other orchestra, you get them. So why do I need a second orchestra?"

The present season foretold the future. The old approach—in which Solti arrived, checked into a hotel apartment, and combined days of rehearsal, recording, and administrative work with evenings of concerts, with a departure for Europe set for a few hours after the final downbeat—was over. He arrived in Chicago the second week of November and remained on the North American continent until the first week of February. He stayed around, attending to administration, as his associate conductor and guests led subscription programs. April finds him back on the job in Chicago with a schedule extending well into May.

Indeed, the Americanization of (the now *Sir* Georg) Solti has progressed to the point that, when he wanted a vacation, it became an American vacation. Florida saw him at Thanksgiving. Even Disney World became a prime attraction for his two young daughters. During the Christmas break in the concert schedule, he cultivated his natural aptitude for beachcombing on a remote Caribbean island.

For a man who has faced many orchestras zapped by jet lag, the discovery that there was sea and sunshine just a few hours of flying time away, that the balance between northern and southern life-styles which he found so attractive in Europe could be duplicated on this continent, was a revelation. "You know," he reported with obvious delight, "from here to there is just one hour time change!"

Liberation from the Utrillo skies and London fogs of Chicago in winter has its obvious appeal, but more important was liberation from the North Atlantic shuttle. Solti hates long journeys, especially when he must move his family and an entourage of proper British servants, or accept separation for three or four grim weeks, rattling loose in a Chicago hotel while life went on, without papa, in London. No swinging single these days, but 100 percent the perfect husband and father, Solti is happiest surrounded by wife and daughters. Arrangements for educating his children are now the heart of all his plans for residence in the United States, and his oldest child has already been accepted by a Chicago private school. When present commitments have been terminated, Solti takes for granted that one thing which should assure his regular appearance to launch the Chicago season (an irregular happening in his first six years) will be the opening of her school term in September. His guest engagements—for London and Paris will continue to see him in that role—will be shaped to the Chicago calendar.



"The time is 2:15 P.M. *The temperature is 70. The air is acceptable. The weather is perfect. The sun is shining. The market is up. The times are good. The living is easy. The vibes are zingy and the ambience is 97 percent and rising."*

Now that he is the complete paterfamilias, Solti tends to discuss his professional situation in terms of domestic metaphors. The orchestra has become a family, the relationship of the conductor and musicians a good marriage. Oddly, the "marriage," he acknowledges, "began with a divorce." He recognizes as both tactless and unjustified the remarks he made soon after his appointment, when he complained that a majority of the orchestra's players were well into middle age. He now gladly acknowledges that though a very large portion of the Chicago Symphony's personnel will be reaching the retirement decade in the Eighties, their playing is that of musicians years younger. Nevertheless, in making new appointments, Solti often has—at the expense of a certain amount of controversy—selected musicians under 30, whose Chicago careers will probably extend into the new century.

"First the marriage, then the divorce, now the honeymoon," he reports. And the honeymoon has never ended. If every Paris rehearsal brought yelling and screaming, Solti's Chicago rehearsals are models of quiet, concentrated work. "The major satisfaction," he observed recently, "is that I have never had a row with the orchestra, never. Never any sort of real row in which I had to shout." The most frequent complaint of the musicians is that he gives them more responsibility—in "proofreading" their playing—than they are accustomed to having.

If Solti hears a wrong note or an obvious mistake, but is sure that the player has heard it, too, it is the player's job to fix it. Solti will intervene only if he hears it again, if he senses that his attention is required. He will begin a rehearsal by dragging from a pocket a rumpled list of mistakes noted previously, things that must be fixed. Frequently he will not even ask to *hear* the corrections, but will simply assume that they will appear in due course.

For musicians accustomed, in former associations, to the methods of a Toscanini, Szell, or Reiner—who wanted to be sure that all was well before proceeding—this faith in the musicianship and dedication of his colleagues contributes, in large measure, to the respect Solti enjoys.

"Conducting," Solti told a student audience at the University of Chicago this winter, "is a slave profession. If

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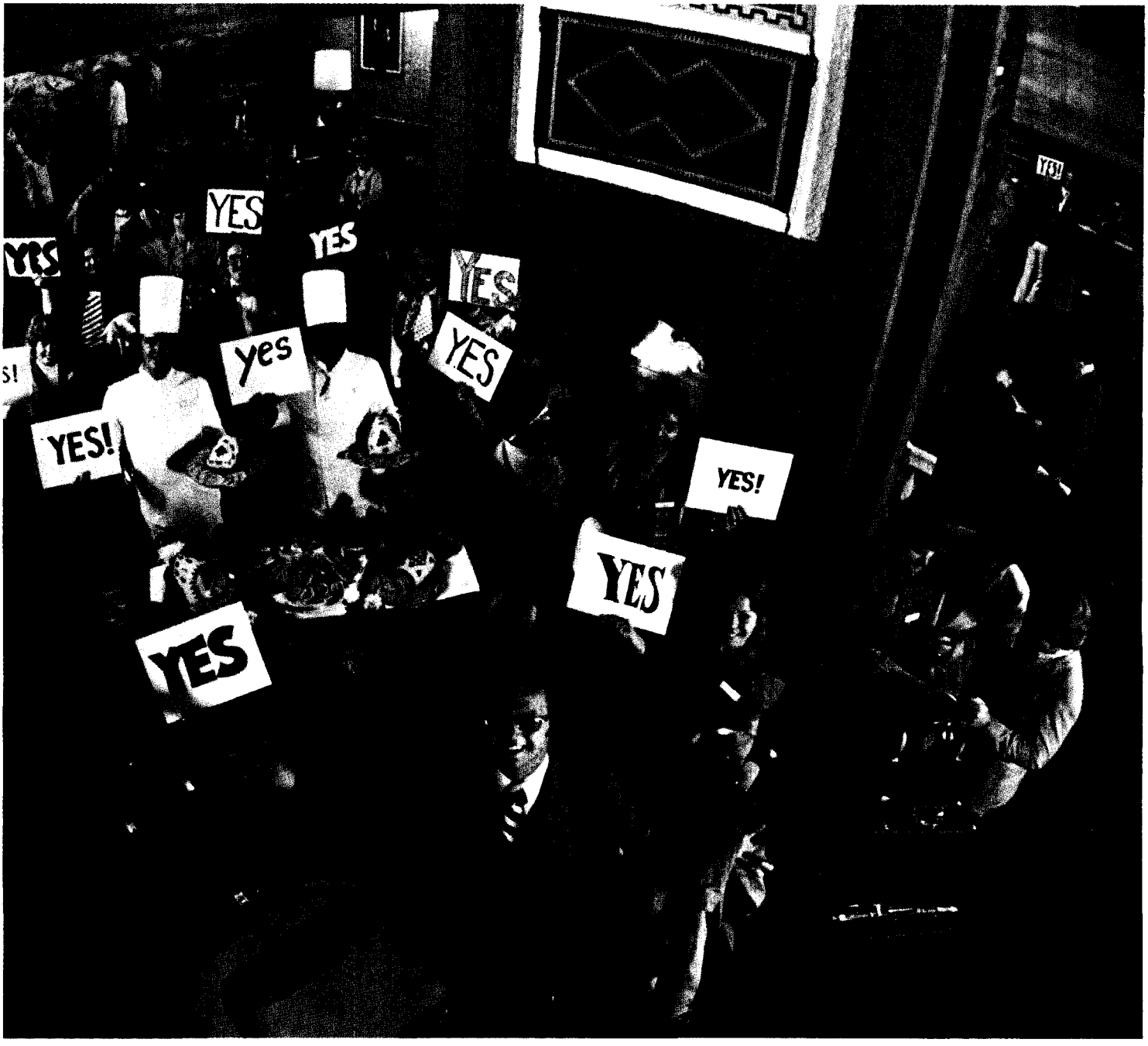

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you do not take it seriously, you will be punished. If you do, you will punish yourself." The demand for growth is unceasing, and this becomes a demand for constant restudy of even the most familiar repertory. This, in turn, produces constant dissatisfaction with one's previous work. (Solti spends little time listening to records, least of all his own.)

But the punishment diminishes and the joys increase if one feels that he is not alone, that his colleagues share his goals, that his listeners grasp his intentions. Solti considers university students his best audience and will gladly take the orchestra to them whenever possible. A project that he hopes to achieve in a season or so is a subscription series for students only. In return, Solti has become a cultural hero of the undergraduate generation. His University of Chicago lecture packed the largest hall on campus, yet the atmosphere was casual and charged with affection and respect.

LOOKING BACKWARD through his Chicago years, Solti sees his most important failure as having been a neglect in educating the public. There are two aspects of the problem: improving the response of existing audiences and providing younger people with the background to make them receptive listeners in the future. Solti declares: "I could give all my time to either problem and not accomplish all that needs to be done." As he sees it, older listeners are noisy and inattentive because they are bored. One reason for boredom is the subscription pattern that requires them to go to concerts whether they feel like it or not. But for a management to secure maximum box-office income, subscription packages including Solti and principal guest conductor Carlo Maria Guilini are the primary inducement.

Still, the Solti seasons have seen a reshuffling of concert schedules in the interest of younger listeners. One Friday matinee series, long attended by the audience of middle-aged ladies of good family that is customary with American orchestras offering such a sequence, became two short evening series attended primarily by young couples. The switch delighted the conductor, although it produced rumbles of discontent among the fund-raisers.

With increased periods of residence in Chicago, Solti has made an effective reply to the common criticism that he is an absentee music director. The other common complaint, that his programming is focused on recording requirements and providing fresh excitement for New York concert-goers in Carnegie Hall visits, has been effectively answered by preparation of memorable things only for Chicago. An example was the exceptional account of the Bach *St. Matthew Passion* in the spring of 1974; more recently he has offered Chicago such repertory as the Schoenberg "Variations for Orchestra" (which he would like to record, but cannot because it has been preempted on the London label by Zubin Mehta).

Solti is, of course, concerned with world economics and its effect on the arts, both in countries where there is direct government subsidy and in those where private philanthropy bears the primary burden. The orchestra is constantly invited to tour, but, says Solti, "I am now very cautious. The storm warnings are here." In the works is a long-overdue tour of the state of Illinois, as part of the Bicentennial year. In it Solti will, in effect, reply to another criticism: that although the Chicago Symphony receives a large portion of the music appropriation of the Illinois Arts Council, its music is better known in New York than in the central and southern portions of its home state.

With the opening of that Bicentennial year, Solti will become an American conductor. This means, as he sees it, that the Chicago alliance will last "as long as people want me," which is to say, as long as he is able to conduct. This is certain to include many things he has not ventured to date, including a full-length opera (Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*) to be recorded in the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts (University of Illinois at Urbana).

"As long as people want me" may be some time, from the Solti viewpoint. He is thinking ahead "to my successor . . . and his successor in 20 years' time." As Solti puts it, "in 1979, I am 67 years old —a beginner for a conductor" (Stokowski, for example, has been conducting recordings in his 90s). He will then reconsider how much of an administrative burden he wishes to carry.

But it is clear that if his health remains good, Solti may well lead the Chicago Symphony for most of the last quarter of this century. If he and the orchestra continue to grow in artistry and prestige, as they have since 1969, Solti may find himself throughout that period the dominant force in American orchestral music. □

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Music to My Ears

by Irving Kolodin

Rostropovich in Exile—Penny-Dreadful, Pound-Foolish "Salome"

Mstislav Rostropovich, sumptuous artist, subtle technician, fulfilled superbly his rank as the world's greatest cellist at his latest appearance in Carnegie Hall. Some months ago, the designation might have been qualified to respect the living presence of the late Pablo Casals. Now that that long-lived paragon has passed into history, Rostropovich stands alone. Unhappily, that is not only as cellist without challenge, but as an exile from the Soviet Union (for having harbored Solzhenitsyn prior to his expulsion). Fortunately, the exile includes his wife, the great soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, with whom Rostropovich has been appearing in recital, in his alternate identity of piano accompanist.

Each time he reappears in his specialty, Rostropovich shows increasing mastery of one of music's supreme logistical problems: how to handle an instrument too big to be fondled, too small to be overpowered, and altogether capable of complaining audibly when mishandled. When he first showed his rare skills here in 1956, Rostropovich unveiled a new tactical approach to the problem: This was a longer peg (the device by which the body of the instrument makes contact with the floor) than the average, and bent at an angle that brought the instrument much closer to the horizontal than is customary. On this latest appearance, the peg appeared to be less acutely angled, the cello closer to its conventional position. But that could have been an illusion. Certainly the results Rostropovich obtained were every bit as unconventional as they have been in the past.

Included were the extraordinarily long phrases in the Vivaldi adagio (in A minor) with which he had the daring to begin his recital. It is a work that offers no hiding place for any form of bowing or fingering misdemeanor, especially at the deliberate pace Rostropovich selected. His steady bow control and tightly controlled vibrato sustained each sound as long as required to form a design framed by silence.

Rostropovich with cello—"An instrument altogether capable of complaining audibly when mishandled."

Long before there was such a thing as political détente, Rostropovich espoused his own form of artistic entente with Benjamin Britten, with whom he has performed at the composer's Aldeburgh Festival, and to whom he has been a host in Moscow. (It will not be forgotten that the soprano part in Britten's memorable "War Requiem" was written for Mme. Vishnevskaya.) The latest extension is a suite by Britten for unaccompanied cello (no. 3, opus 87) dedicated to Rostropovich and performed by him at Carnegie Hall for the first time in America.

It begins lento and ends eight uninterrupted segments later with a passacaglia (Lento Solenne). The sections in between are designated Allegro (Marcia), Con moto (Canto), Lento (Barcarola), Allegretto (Dialogo), Andante Espressivo (Fuga), Fantastico (Recitativo), and Presto (Moto perpetuo). Although a printed text or program analysis was not available, it would not be surprising to learn that transformation of a basic theme was part of the compositional scheme. Taken together, the nine sections could be characterized as a portrait of the performer, reviewing not only all his moods and manners, but calling upon every resource of his art, from multiple stopping to intricate harmonics. Far from a virtuoso piece in design or character, it could only make the profound impression it did in the hands of such a virtuoso as Rostropovich. Samuel Sanders was the expert piano collaborator in Schumann's Fantasiestücke and Sonatas of Beethoven (opus 5, no. 2) and Debussy, all masterfully played.

Julius Rudel is engaging in a penny-dreadful, pound-foolish production of a standard work that deserves better, in the New York City Opera's spring season in the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center. It is Strauss's *Salome*, in which Maralin Niska displays a neat body and a less neat voice. She does everything but play catch with the head of John the Baptist, in a staging by Ian Strasfogel that succeeds in competing with, rather than complementing, Strauss's score. This is as close to a foolproof formula for failure as could be devised.

The procedure is penny-dreadful and pound-foolish, because, when the eccentricities of Miss Niska's harlequinade have run their course, there is very little in the production to illuminate either Oscar Wilde's play or its setting by Strauss. Everything in the musical presentation is scaled to the limited volume (for Straussian purposes) of the Niska voice, a small likeness to the "16-year-old with the voice of an Isolde," which Strauss postulated as the ideal Salome. Miss Niska did more than credibly in re-creating the first part of the Straussian requirement: She was slim, self-willed, a petulant princess who firmly believed herself entitled to anything she wanted, including the head of Jokanaan. She earned her ghoulish reward with the cleverest pantomime of a nautch dance

(*Continued on page 59.*)

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Seeing Things

by Hollis Alpert

Fred and Ginger, Please Come Back

It certainly seemed a promising idea—to gather up a bunch of old Cole Porter songs and build around them a musical film that would evoke those glorious (in memory, at least) musicals of the Thirties, in which Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers danced and sang against lavish backgrounds that provided momentary relief from the hard realities of the Great Depression. The public was apparently ready for such a film; it had given *That's Entertainment!*, compiled from MGM's storehouse of musicals, a rousing welcome.

The idea was Peter Bogdanovich's. He had already demonstrated his genius, in Hollywood terms, by shepherding three previous films to heady box-office success. Another, *Daisy Miller*, lacked the necessary yeast to rise, but that was thought to have taught the young director the lesson that Henry James was simply not for the masses.

So Bogdanovich wrote, directed, and produced *At Long Last Love*, and it demonstrates nothing so much as how easily a fellow can be deluded by his evaluation of his own brilliance. With no experience in writing a musical, he wrote one. With no experience in directing a musical, he directed one. And with no experience in producing a musical, he produced one. There is such a thing as artistic failure. But the only artistry evident in *At Long Last Love* is in the Cole Porter material, which is given the sort of treatment that does not warrant its resurrection. No, this is failure so dismal that it goes beyond failure. The musical is not trash, exactly. Its rottenness lies in the pretension and inflated ego behind its conception, in its pandering to film-buff nostalgia, and in some of the sorriest casting ever to sink a production.

Those old musicals, silly as they often were, had story lines that attempted at least to justify the spectacle and the requisite song-and-dance numbers. Occasionally, they even reflected faintly the real preoccupations of the audiences. In *Gold Diggers of 1933*, the chorus that sang "Remember My Forgotten Man" represented ranks of the unemployed. Above all, as *That's Entertainment!* reminded us, the stellar performers could genuinely sing and genuinely dance. For swimmacles, champion Esther Williams was the star; for skating spectacles, it was champion Sonja Henie. Bogdanovich apparently forgot this factor when he cast Burt Reynolds and Cybill Shepherd as the leads in a story so rickety that it provides not the slightest excuse for 16 Cole Porter songs. It's as though a horticulturist had attempted to mate a rosebush with a cactus.

What's it about? Something to do with a rich heir with a white Rolls-Royce, his chauffeur, and a songstress he meets by knocking her over. Then there's an heiress, who is temporarily impoverished for some reason, and her maid. And there's an Italian gambler. But I can't go on, other than to say that there are love partners who switch to other love partners. It's so hard to describe the drivel that I can't imagine *anyone* sitting down to write a *whole script* about it.

Why cast Burt Reynolds to sing and dance, even though he had previously demonstrated no such abilities? Well, he's an important star, and when you spend $6 or $7 million on something, the banks insist that you have a major star. Why Cybill Shepherd, whose previous appearances have indicated little in the way of acting ability or a voice that can carry a tune? Well, she's Bogdanovich's girl friend. So it is that Reynolds and Shepherd charge through Cole Porter's lyrics like high-school sophomores out to earn their A's in creative dramatics. There is here and there a bit of professionalism in the dreary morass. Madeline Kahn, a delightful performer with a gift for satire and something of a voice, does her best, as a genuine trouper should, but it is sad to watch, for it reminds one of nothing so much as a friend sinking helplessly into quicksand. Is this any way to resuscitate the Hollywood musical? No.

BETTER BY FAR is *Funny Lady*, in which Barbra Streisand not only steals the show but makes it plain that she owns it. The story carries on the fitful saga of Fanny Brice, who served as the excuse for Streisand to display her comedic gifts and her singing style in *Funny Girl*, a vast success of a few years ago. If

FILM NOTES

The Great Waldo Pepper. This pet project of George Roy Hill's, which attempts to capture the times and spirit of the barnstorming pilots of the Twenties, gets off the ground only fitfully. His favorite star, Robert Redford, plays Waldo the Great, a veteran of World War I who never managed to meet the German ace Ernst Kessler in mortal sky combat. Waldo has taken to stunting around the Midwest, partners with a rival pilot (Bo Svenson), and eventually they both get to Hollywood, which is in the midst of making World War I flying epics. And whom do you think Waldo meets up with? The great Ernst himself, now a technical expert. Will Waldo best the German ace? Will they make it back to the ground? Unfortunately, the script that William Goldman has rigged from Hill's story idea is paper-thin and allows Redford little but his familiar mannerisms. The flying scenes are lovely, though. Spads and tri-winged Fokkers, and a new monoplane that tries to negotiate the hitherto-unperformed outside loop, wing-walking, and other stunts, provide the otherwise leaden story with genuine moments of excitement.

In Celebration. The David Storey play, done for the American Film Theatre by director Lindsay Anderson with a superb cast. It may still be possible to catch the film in various cities as it runs for its two-day stands. Alan Bates, Brian Cox, and James Bolam are the brothers who pay their yearly visit to their coal-miner father and adored mother. But the family reunion turns into an emotional shambles as Bates pokes acidly away at the smug facade. Each of the sons has come out twisted in his way. Skeletons of the past begin to rattle in the ratty living room, the father is forced into accepting the truth of his failed, dreary life, and only the mother is allowed to keep her vision of herself as a devoted, loving wife and mother. Storey is out to pare away the hypocrisy surrounding familial sentiment, and he does so with a scalpel. It's a pain-filled, discomfiting play, and the film version, while hardly cinematic, nobly sustains the dramatic material.

H.A.

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Streisand is not exactly the whole show, she's surely the best thing in it. We take up her adventures at a time when the Depression has hit the country, when she is now separated and about to be divorced from gambler Nick Arnstein, whom she still yearns for, and when she runs into a pushy young songwriter and nightclub owner whose name is, of course, Billy Rose. He's played by James Caan, an odd choice for the diminutive and definitely ethnic Billy. Caan is tall and looks suspiciously like a Wasp.

The first hour of *Funny Lady* has a good deal of verve, mainly because Herbert Ross, the director, knows Broadway and Broadway production practice (he was once a dance director himself), and he has a merry time making fun out of and fun with Rose's efforts to get a musical off the ground—a musical starring, naturally, Fanny Brice, which is to say Streisand. She's funny, too. Unfortunately, Nick Arnstein, in the person of Omar Sharif, is brought back on the scene, and the musical starts going into a slow, winding dive. The lines provided by Jay Presson Allen and Arnold Schulman have, to this point, been fairly crackling. Now they take a turn not only for the worse but for the banal. I got the impression someone important involved with the musical doesn't like Sharif, for he is saddled with clichés, which bring unwanted laughter from the audience. No one could say those lines with a straight face and get away with them, and Sharif doesn't. Streisand, even in those scenes, has better lines, or maybe she's just plain expert at delivering them.

Fanny marries Billy for no other reason than, as she tells a friend, "I fell in like with him." The marriage is a failure, so, once more, she looks up old Nick, who has meanwhile married an heiress and taken up polo. We now learn the reason why she had ever married Nick. It seems she once went into his bathroom and found there seven toothbrushes, one for each day of the week, and was so dazzled by this that she fell headlong in love with him. Surely this is something unique in the long cavalcade of love on the screen. Unfortunately, the film can't survive guff of that kind. We are left with Fanny as she settles into her lonely middle years, and I, for one, couldn't manage to empathize. But there are those for whom Barbra Streisand can do no wrong, and if she's your bag—better make that "cup" of tea—*Funny Lady* may well please you. I was pleased only by that first hour. □

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Theater

by Henry Hewes

Star Impact at Lincoln Center

A funny thing has happened at Lincoln Center. After a season and a half of attempting the illogical policy of presenting mostly untried and unpleasant new plays at the large Vivian Beaumont Theater, and staging Shakespeare revivals at the intimate Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, producer Joseph Papp has finally decided to schedule star-studded revivals at the Beaumont and to develop an American acting company there.

One would like to think that this decision was brought about by some critics who have been gently nudging Papp in this direction for some time now. However, the new policy probably owes more to the dollars-and-sense fact that audiences have been dwindling and that Norwegian film star Liv Ullmann's six-week Lincoln Center appearance in *A Doll's House* was sold out before it opened. Or that Papp was able to persuade Ms. Ullmann to return next season in Shaw's *St. Joan*.

Ms. Ullmann is indeed an extraordinarily fresh and responsive actress, and her performance as Nora is full of infectious delight, relaxed subtlety, and astonishing variety. She is utterly charming in the early part of the drama as the housewife who enjoys playing the "little squirrel" her husband likes her to be. Ms. Ullmann takes her time and luxuriates in every imaginary satisfaction the charade brings her. When she thinks of the prospect of having not just enough money but "lots and lots," she jingles as innocently as an old-fashioned cash register at a bazaar.

When clouds appear on the horizon, Ms. Ullmann shifts moods quickly, showing a moment of terror and then jumping back to her former cheerfulness as if nothing had happened. Yet she can say, "It's wonderful to be alive and happy," in such a way that we know that she is deceiving herself.

Unfortunately, the actress is fighting a losing battle against several fatal deficiencies. She still has not mastered English to the point where she always seems to be thinking the word she is speaking. But this is less bothersome than the apparent inadequacy of the supporting cast around her, an inadequacy that one suspects to be the result of director Tormod Skagestad's interpretation of Ibsen's classic. For one thing he has that splendid actor, Sam Waterston, portray the husband as a posturing phony who lacks the strength necessary either to enslave or to terrify Nora. For this reason and others, Nora here seems to progress from a vital and happy housewife in the beginning to a pale and unsure seeker of a new destiny at the end. Such an interpretation may be psychologically valid, but it is less emotionally effective than a Nora who blooms only when she is finally liberated.

Friedman-Abeles

Liv Ullmann with Sam Waterston in A Doll's House—*"From a happy housewife to an unsure seeker of a new destiny."*

The personal success of the star and the contrasting inadequacy of this production have evidently led Papp to the conclusion that Lincoln Center should return to its original task of developing an American acting ensemble of a skill equivalent to that of the Royal Shakespeare Company or Britain's National Theatre. And he recognizes that until he has developed his own American stars as classic actors, he can keep his enterprise exciting by using a few visiting performers of the quality of Ms. Ullmann.

FOR PROOF of how a classic repertory system can expand the talent of performers, one has only to look at Diana Rigg in the National Theatre production of *The Misanthrope*, currently visiting Broadway. Ms. Rigg began her career as a pretty ingenue whose promise was no greater than that of a dozen others of her age. She turned to television and became popular in a series called "The Avengers." Then she turned her back on the big money to join the National and gain the chance to tackle roles that demanded all her intelligence and that forced her to acquire new skills.

In *The Misanthrope*, Tony Harrison's updating new translation, John Dexter's staging, and the inspired set and modern costumes by Tanya Moisewitch have all conspired to change the focus of the play. Amid the gigantic rotted drapes and the mildewed gold mirrors, Molière's old masterpiece now emerges as more the tragedy of the debutante, Célimène, hopelessly captured by the pleasures of an insincere and shallow society, than it does the traditional salute to the plain-speaking Alceste, a young man who is able to see through and reject that society.

Ms. Rigg shows us this tragedy every twinkling step of the way, and she is generously assisted by Alec McCowen, who plays Alceste as an outrageously impossible Puritan. When Célimène turns down the proposal to marry him and live far away from Paris, Ms. Rigg is devastating as she wisely tells him, "I'm only 20! I'd be terrified! Just you and me, and all that countryside!" Her final moment alone among the elegant ruins is utterly poignant, a triumph for her and for all ingenues who would be actresses. □

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A birthday.
Happy homecoming.
Welcome to fatherhood.
The Holiday season.
Bon voyage.
Welcome to the neighborhood.
Thank you.
Father's Day.
An anniversary.

...these are just some of the times you instinctively feel the gift should be equal in every way to the thought. You wish the best; you give the best.

What is best?

We'd like to give you an easy answer. We'd like to say that Maker's Mark is the finest whisky to come out of Kentucky.

But Bill Samuels, our president, won't let us say it.

He says there's no such thing as a universal "best" in whisky — that it's always a matter of personal taste.

We do know this, Bill set out to make the very best whisky he knew how — and as a fourth generation Kentucky distiller, he knew how.

And in his own eyes, he succeeded. In other words, he believes Maker's Mark is the best Kentucky whisky to be had at any price. And we can say that there's a large and steadily growing number of people who agree with him.

There is no way our little distillery can put up enough Maker's Mark to go around everywhere. So you may not be able to find it the first place you try — but that's another reason why those who receive a bottle will value it all the more.

it tastes expensive
...and is.
Maker's Mark
WHISKY
Made from an original old style sour mash recipe by Bill Samuels, fourth generation Kentucky Distiller.

Maker's Mark Distillery, Loretto, Ky.,
Ninety Proof - Fully Matured.

Just for giving?

So far, we haven't touched on those times when you yourself might feel especially deserving. All we can say is this: Try a bottle of Maker's Mark. There's a good chance you will consider it the best you've ever tasted. And if so, you'll be all set for those times when only the very best will do.

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When you're in our neck of the woods, we cordially invite you to visit our little distillery on Star Hill Farm near Loretto. Meanwhile, if you have an interest in the history of whisky-making in the Bluegrass state, write for a free copy of our little booklet, "The Wonderful World of Kentucky Whisky."

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Dance

by Walter Terry

Dancing Is Where You Find It: Everywhere

BLIP is not necessarily a warning on a radar screen. Indeed, it may well serve as a most pleasant augury of auspicious days ahead. At least in Pittsburgh, Pa., it does, for there BLIP is the common abbreviation for Ballet Lives in Pittsburgh, an organization of 150 young married couples (under 30) that provides enthusiastic, exuberant support to the very young and vital Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. BLIP may not be able to equal the financial assistance supplied the company by, say, the United States Steel Foundation or Gulf Oil (two of many distinguished backers), but the name BLIP, with brash succinctness, says it all.

The Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre was founded five years ago by Nicolas Petrov, a Yugoslav dancer who has numbered among his teachers the late Olga Preobrajenska (the beloved "Preo" of Fonteyn and many other stars) and the choreographer Leonide Massine. His newly named co-director is Frederic Franklin, one of the great dancers of the recent past, a skilled ballet master and a first-class mime. The troupe they head is large-scale (about 50 dancers) and beautifully trained and disciplined. The mark of high professionalism is everywhere: The principals are strong, the soloists versatile, the character dancers well-coached, the corps neat; productions are handsome, with big sets and beautiful costumes; musical support usually comes from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra; and glittering, rococo Heinz Hall, a splendidly restored movie palace, is home.

Five years ago the company relied heavily on guest stars; audiences, I am told, were small, and Pittsburgh itself was indifferent. Petrov brought extensive professional experience and determination to the project, and Loti (Mrs. Leon) Falk brought financial help, devotion, and enormous fund-raising skills (and charm) to the enterprise. Today guest stars aren't needed, Heinz Hall is filled, and it's BLIP all the way.

Michael Friedlander

Frederic Franklin (left) as Father Lorenzo in the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's Romeo and Juliet*—"A skilled ballet master and a first-class mime."*

The production that I saw recently was Petrov's three-act *Romeo and Juliet* to the Prokofiev score and with costumes and scenery (spare, stylized sets, but with realistic props) by Henry Heymann, effective lighting by Pat Simmons, and lively fencing sequences coached by Richard Fox. Petrov has held to the libretto of Leonid Lavrovsky (who first choreographed the ballet in Leningrad 35 years ago), so it is understandable that his own movement patterns are influenced by the Russian original. Further, Petrov's style is workmanlike rather than inspired. Movement responses to the music are literal, with steps on the beats, gestures on the beats, for few phrases are free of metric confinement, but steps, gestures, duelings, dramatic scenes, and mass moments are well put together, and the Shakespearean story comes out clear, precise, and, because it is beautifully danced and touchingly acted, wholly satisfying.

Alexander Filipov (*SR/W*, September 21, 1974), who shuttles between Pittsburgh and San Francisco companies, is a quick, boyish, and fate-defiant Romeo, and Jordeen Ivanov, a Pittsburgh Ballet product, is a girlish, mischievous, and, ultimately, sweetly poignant Juliet. Mr. Franklin himself—how fortunate for us to find a onetime great dancer maturing into a great actor—plays Father Lorenzo (Friar Laurence) with a quality of shining benevolence and gentle authority. The others in the large cast perform their roles with individuality yet with an awareness of the overall style of the piece itself.

The Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre has a repertory that includes *The Nutcracker* (of course!); *Giselle* (staged by Franklin); the four-act *Swan Lake* (restaged by Franklin and Petrov); Leonide Massine's *Gaieté Parisienne*; Michel Fokine's *Petrouchka*; Anton Dolin's *Pas de Quatre*; Petrov's *Rite of Spring*; ballets by Ruth Page and John Taras; a new production, next fall, of Agnes de Mille's masterpiece, *Rodeo*; Petrov's new choreographic tribute to Pittsburgh, *Steel Concerto*; and a new ballet by Stuart Sebastian, *Winterset*—all American and all pertinent to our Bicentennial.

IF IT IS BLIP in Pennsylvania, in Massachusetts the signs are out on chests and bosoms courtesy of T-shirts that proclaim, "TOE ZONE—The Boston Ballet." This major American company, founded

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Susan Cook

The real Ruth St. Denis (left), and Janet Towner as St. Denis in Visualization—*"A remarkable biography in dance."*

and directed by E. Virginia Williams, is a 12-year-old veteran with budgets that now pass the million mark and extensive tours that go far, far beyond the borders of the Commonwealth.

Recently (*SR*, January 25), I commented briefly on the Boston Ballet. Now a word should be added about its highly important "Experiment in Dance." This was a choreographic workshop, a nine-performance showing of new works by eight young choreographers. I was particularly impressed with Ron Cunningham's *Holberg Suite* (Grieg), which uses the classical ballet vocabulary but with winning freshness, including bits of humor, romantic touches, bravura teases, and a sort of Bournonville bounce (that exuberant Danish style) without being imitative of Bournonville himself.

Cunningham's *Aesop's Fables* (with music of Claude Ponthie), seven of them, are delightful children's fare. They are pantomimic and gesturally funny (with funny costumes), and I can see them done in a classroom or on a gymnasium floor, with kids grouped around, rather than on a formal stage. *The Albatross* (Second Movement of Shostakovich's Twelfth Symphony), choreographed by Lorenzo Monreal, serves best as a vehicle for the company's virtuosic *premier danseur,* Woytek Lowski. It has an interesting start in which a distorted body, trembling arms as wings, and other grotesqueries summon up the myths of the albatross, but the avian conceit is soon exhausted, balleticisms prevail, and the albatross does indeed hang heavy. Lowski does it brilliantly, but he is better served by Monreal's all-too-short *Balalaika Dance* (traditional music), in which light and joyous peasant *pas* culminate in a series of dazzling multiple air turns.

In Alfonso Figueroa's *Primus* (Remi Gassman music) we were back at the old primitive ritual (nowhere, notime, noplace) again. We had two girls with Ubangi neckbands, passages that might be from *Tarzan and the Women of Ophir* or somewhere, and some Vegas beauties in what might pass for a harem sale in a grade-Z fake-Oriental movie. Robert Steele's *Pas de Deux* (Tchaikovsky) reminds one of the balcony scene from you know what—it is sweetly innocent and innocuous. Frank Ohman's *Melodie* (Tchaikovsky) is also generally innocuous, but its "barcarolle" has some lovely linked-arms designs (two boys, two girls), and the *Pas de Deux* is highlighted by a stunningly supported *grand jeté* motif that first slices across the stage and, toward the end, is echoed in anti-gravitational slow motion.

The dancers themselves, I was informed, were crazy about Rael Lamb's *Butterfly* (Morton Subotnick), but it must be more fun to do than to see. True, it contains some passing designs that grab attention—a touch of the erotic, a dash of the macabre, a spurt of virtuosity—but there is no cumulative effect. Perhaps it is because there are isolated *thrusts* of action but no steady *drive.*

As for the featured dancers—Sarazin, Lowski, Catanzaro, Brown, Drummond, Van Heerdens, Shoaff, Steele, the highly promising Kaethe Devlin (only 17), and Mark Johnson, among others—they were in splendid charge of Boston's no-penalty, high-reward "Toe Zone."

ONE FLIGHT UP a dingy staircase in a small Manhattan studio you will find

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one of the great American dance figures of this century, Charles Weidman. Mr. Weidman, now in his mid-70s, was one of the dance titans—Martha Graham, Hanya Holm, the late Helen Tamiris, and his own celebrated partner, the late Doris Humphrey—who not only presided over but actually invented America's modern dance. The inadéquacy of his tiny studio-theater at 102 West Twenty-ninth Street in no way cramps the creativity of the man who gave to the theater a new concept of movement called "kinetic pantomime" and such masterpieces as the terrifying *Lynchtown*, the noble Lincoln portrait in *A House Divided*, the riotous *Flickers*, and the hilarious Thurber *Fables*, along with choreographic monuments belonging to both him and Miss Humphrey.

His newest choreography, *Visualization* or *From a Farm in New Jersey*, is one of his most richly inventive and radiant creations. It is also unabashed nostalgia in its tribute to the "goddess" herself, Ruth St. Denis, who together with Ted Shawn reigned over the Denishawn dance empire and produced such world-famous dance innovators as Graham, Humphrey, and, of course, Weidman.

Visualization is a remarkable biography in dance of little Ruthie Dennis, that New Jersey farm girl who discovered within herself the miracle of rhythmic movement; who touched the earth and reached for the sky; who moved in swirling ecstasy or who stood motionless in a dynamic stillness that was to excite the sculptor Rodin and stir the poet von Hofmannsthal; who was born, in 1877, into an era that accepted dancing, if at all, as a mere diversion; and who left it, more than 90 years later, as an experience in the illumination of the human spirit.

Mr. Weidman, in his choreography, has created in purely dance terms the incredible evolution of a dance genius, Ruth St. Denis, and here, in Part I of this biography, his own choreographic concept of this evolution is surely a work of genius. In Part II, which is deliciously theatrical, he provides us with enchanting glimpses of St. Denis in various roles, Shawn dancing with his wife in romantic duets and in solo bursts of virile action, the young Martha Graham in her first solo (*Serenata Morisca*, 1916), the lyrical and lovely Doris Humphrey in her Denishawn days, and himself in his first solo success (*The Crapshooter*).

Janet Towner, the principal dancer of his group, is superb as Dennis-St. Denis, not only in the ebullient childhood explorations but also as the great star. Without resembling St. Denis in any way physically, she has, through Weidman's guidance, captured to an uncanny degree many of the characteristics, inner as well as overt, of the dance world's fabled "Miss Ruth." I recommend that you climb those stairs. It isn't Lincoln Center, but you will find the art of dancing at the top. □

CAPSULE COMMENTS

Ogden Nash made his comment on one of New York City's boroughs in a four-word poem that goes, "The Bronx?/No thonx." But in mid-February there was every reason to say to the Bronx's Gould Student Center Theater, "Thank you very much." The occasion was performances by the busily touring **Hartford Ballet,** a chamber-size troupe that, under the astute artistic direction of Michael Uthoff, gets better and better all the time. Certainly, his dancers have never performed his delightful, beautifully patterned classical *Concerto Grosso* (Vivaldi) so cleanly, or his rich, earthy *Cantata* (Ginastera) so strongly. Lotte Goslar's brand-new *Leggieros* (set to Beethoven's Diabelli Variations) proved to be as light as its title and, in many episodes, quite funny. And *Duo* (set to music—Piece for E-flat Saxophone, Guitar and Thumb Piano, and "Michael Song"—by the Entourage) is a thing of beauty as a special vehicle for the very special Lisa Bradley, a moonbeam, gossamer ballerina, handsomely partnered by the almost sculptured Noble Barker.

The **Elizabeth Keen Dance Company,** playing Downstairs at the City Center (a very attractive dancing ground), brought genuine movement invention and theatricality to today's modern dance, which too often eschews anything as brash as dancing that entertains. Most deeply conceived —one felt its impact right to the marrow of one's bones—was Miss Keen's *Pale Cool-Pale Warm* (music of Meyer Kupferman), which I can best describe as having a beautiful (visually) and powerful (sensorially) kinetic inevitability about it. Frothy, funny, but with some deliciously wicked commentary on period mores was *A Polite Entertainment for Ladies and Gentlemen*, triggered by music of Stephen Foster. The Keen Dancers, in both movement idioms, were just great.

What not to do in modern dance was grimly manifested by **Fred Mathews** in a program at the Cubiculo. Several good dancers of the Mathews group were downed by choreography that almost defies description except in matters of quality (very low). I never take notes during performances, but I found that, by the name of a dance called *A Siege of Herons*, I had scrawled "shutter shots," which I presume meant that it was a series of poses which might have looked good as frozen instants for still camera. Comments such as "movement manipulations" and "rhythmic writhings" seem fairly obvious, but what I meant by "chasm" I can only suppose was intended to describe the abyss between Mr. Mathews and his audience.

Lar Lubovitch and his first-rate company were back in the agreeable studio-theater surroundings of the American Theater Laboratory in a program of five Lubovitch-made dances, which varied somewhat in choreographic quality but never in performing excellence. The freshness of Lubovitch's choreographic adventures is always inviting, and such older pieces as *Whirligogs*, with its "knots, tangles, confusion," are a joy to meet up with again.

A very special highlight of the **New York City Ballet's** winter season at the New York State Theater was the return of the beautiful prodigal Suzanne Farrell. Miss Farrell, better than ever after a valuable development period with Maurice Béjart and his Ballet of the 20th Century in Europe, comes back to us as an assured ballerina, less coltish and more elegant, every bit as brilliant as the part she dances in the Diamonds movement of George Balanchine's glorious three-act abstract ballet *Jewels*. The NYCB also has a dazzling newcomer in young Peter Schaufuss, trained in the Royal Danish Ballet and, presumably, coached by his illustrious father, Frank Schaufuss, onetime director of the Royal Danes, and his mother, the ballerina Mona Vangsaa, remembered by many of us as the best Balanchine-style dancer that the Royal Danish Ballet developed when it added Balanchine to its ancient dance heritage.

And whatever city you live in, from Atlanta to Zagreb, you will probably come upon a season by the **Ballet Folklorico of Mexico,** for Amalia Hernandez's engaging company travels everywhere, bringing Mexican warmth, bright Latin colors (in fabrics and rhythms), and Amerindian mysteries to the stages of the world. Although Señora Hernandez is capable of richly delineated choreographic murals of her nation's history and culture—her recreation of Mayan ceremonies, her panorama from birth to death in Tarascan villages, her gutsy female soldiers fighting for life and liberty in the Mexican Revolution—mostly her programs settle for instant entertainment. They won't change your lives, but they will brighten them.

W.T.

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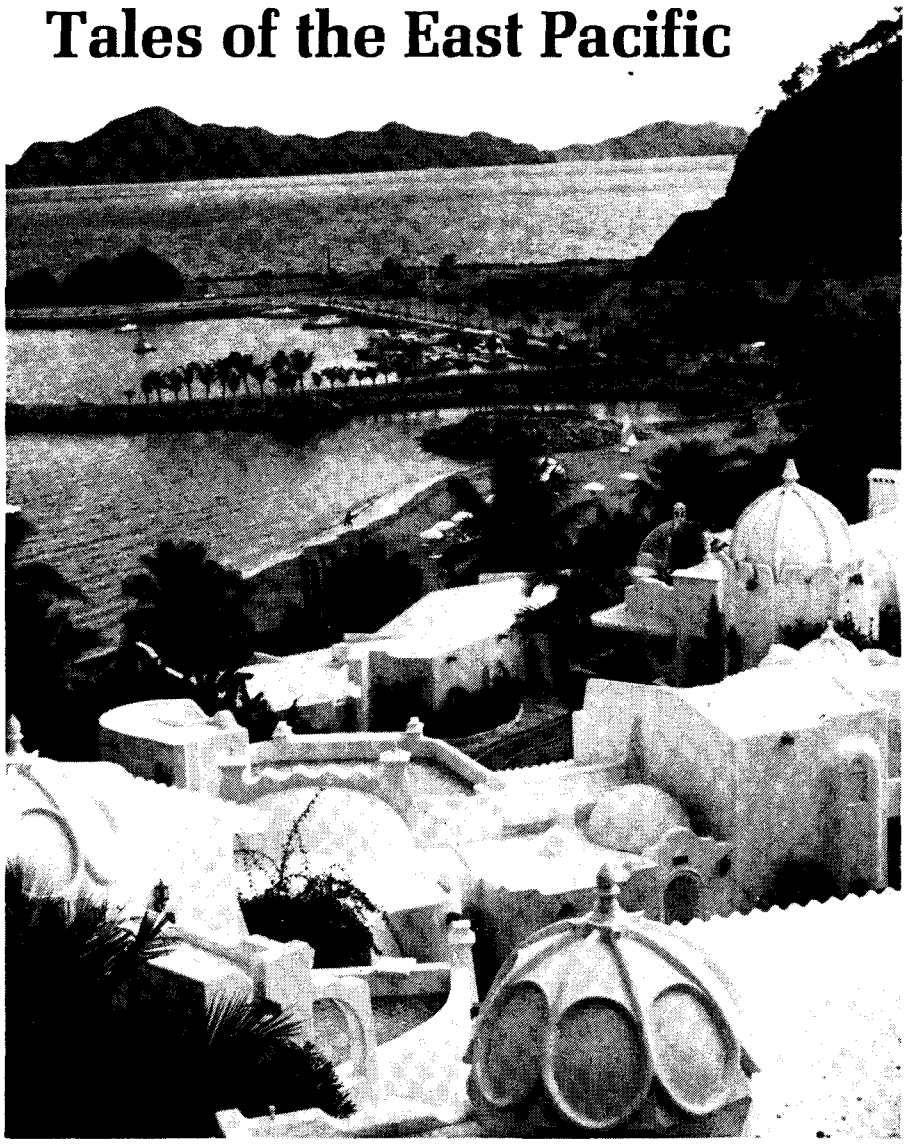
Tales of the East Pacific



Photographs: H.S.

Las Hadas—Moroccan dream, village in Andalusia, or rich man's fantasy?

by Horace Sutton

If you missed out on the discovery of Acapulco by Errol Flynn and other swordsmen sailing down from the Hollywoods, and its transformation from a scruffy, roadless Mexican coastal town into an international resort; if you weren't there for the flowering of Puerto Vallarta, starring Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, who discovered it during the filming of *The Night of the Iguana,* we offer you the beach-spangled stretch of Pacific coast from Manzanillo north to Puerto Vallarta. It has already attracted Antenor Patiño, the tin man from Bolivia; Club Méditerranée, those merchants of the happy life; a handful of American builders who have erected condominiums; and one hapless Mexican hotel that opened in January and looks as if it is ready for refurbishing.

There are still scores upon scores of beaches that remain unclaimed, though many are being eyed covetously, some by the very architects sent down to evolve a master plan. As yet the coast has no handy name such as the well-promoted Costa Brava, the seasoned Côte d'Azur, or the Aga Khan's Costa Smeralda in Sardinia. Indeed it hasn't hit upon as handy a handle as Cancun, that other Mexican development now steaming ahead toward highly populated glory in Quintana Roo, on the Caribbean Sea. Some of the ambivalence derives from the location of the Pacific coastline, which is partly in the Mexican state of Jalisco and partly in Colima. The Jalisco people like to call it the Costa Alegre; the Colima side hasn't come up with a suggestion. But the promoters of some of the reaches north of Manzanillo, including the cove occupied by Club Med's outpost at Playa Blanca, are calling it the Costa de Careyes, the coast of the turtles, and that is the name that will probably stick.

What has opened the hidden coastal coves is the new highway built from Puerto Vallarta south to Manzanillo, a social advance highly favored by Americans in recreational vehicles who escape the rigors of the northwestern winter and nest along the warm, palm-lined shores of Jalisco and Colima. The airport at Manzanillo, which opened last May, was the clincher. Although it was financed by the Patiño group, which built Las Hadas, one of the most elegant and imaginative resorts in the hemisphere, the Manzanillo airport, now served by Aeromexico, the national flag-carrier, has an air route to the whole southern end of this new Riviera. Before the new airport was opened, Manzanillo contented itself with a strip that could take eight-passenger planes that puddle-jumped, with four stops, to Mexico City.

Manzanillo is not the most captivating Pacific town, nor does it seethe with colonial charm. It hasn't yet developed the boutiques and restaurants as well as the movieland lacquer that lifted Puerto Vallarta from dilapidated obscurity to international notoriety, a transformation that instantly turns shabby to quaint. As one of the managers, who dress in starched safari jackets and patrol the elegant precincts of Las Hadas, explained one evening as he viewed the lights of Manzanillo across the bay, "It doesn't look so bad at night."

By day Manzanillo has its own special brand of run-down appeal—the Plaza Hidalgo, for instance, an esplanade favored by pensioners, many from the north, and shared by a statue of Benito Juárez and a model of a sailfish that turns with the wind, mounted in the middle of the fountain. The pushcarts sell mangoes sculpted into flowers, chunks of papaya and watermelon, and slices of *jicama,* a white, crispy fruit that is eaten with salt, lime, and hot sauce.

There isn't much to shop for in Manzanillo unless you are a tenant in a condominium apartment and need groceries. The Restaurant Bar los Equipales qualifies as a historic attraction because it is the last surviving saloon offering a free lunch. A three-peso beer will entitle you—or did the day I was there—to a free serving of fish soup, ceviche, and tacos. For more robust fare the Restau-

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Playa Blanca—"Every afternoon the jocks of Gaul assemble to whoop it up. . . ."

rant Camerones Despierto presents an enormous seafood menu—shrimp, lobsters, crabs, squid, all served on pink tables.

The appearance of so many condominiums in the suburban underbrush, as well as the unveiling of Las Hadas, a resort where one endures on the European plan, has inspired a number of young entrepreneurs to open restaurants. A brawny Yorkshireman named Brian Mackenzie, who played professional football in Canada and wandered into Manzanillo on vacation, runs the Red Snapper, a dark South Seas hut that does fish and chips for old times' sake but, in deference to the local marine trove, will produce a whole lobster for $4.50. El Dorado puts a professional accent on huge shrimp from Guaymas on the Gulf of California and a Mexican touch on steak *tampiqueña* (guacamole, beans, rice, tacos, and everything short of a troupe of mariachis for $4.80). El Dorado also has two dozen rooms with bath ($20 a day, in season), all within a stride of the beach on Manzanillo Bay.

Roca del Mar, a handsome condominium development right on the curving bay, maintains its own tidy restaurant, its tables imaginatively set with orange tablecloths, shocking-pink placemats, and handsome serving plates by Tonala. There is a pool with a swim-up bar, the latest resort necessity, all for the use of the owners or these lessors of the 40 units. Each has two bedrooms, two tiled baths, living room, dining area, and complete kitchen, a pad that any refugee can rent for $52 a day during the snow season up north and $40 after Easter.

Some squatters, much to my personal amazement, prefer life on a cliff top, swept by the sea breezes. For their benefit, a Denver company has created a settlement called Vida del Mar—158 units, all of them in apartment-style spires built on the cliffs high above the Pacific. The list of owners stretches from Australia to Florida. A flat originally cost from $39,000 to $51,000. The management, in turn, rents to any reasonable applicant at $25 a day for one bedroom and bath or $35 for two bedrooms and two baths until June 15, when the price drops to $18 and $25. That includes maid service and a full kitchen. Packaged tours through United Airlines are available for renters during the season. It may prove strange, considering the location of Vida del Mar, as well as the state of the economy, but all the units are sold and 91 more are being built.

With title to a sizable chunk of the countryside, Vida del Mar has a golf course under construction on the lowlands below. Three tennis courts are in place, and so is a clubhouse overlooking two and a half miles of beach on Santiago Bay. A number of villas, also at sea level, can be rented at $38 to $80 a day in winter, beach and pool included, less in summer.

By the time its golf course opens this spring, Vida expects to have a new beachside restaurant ready. Its cliff-top restaurant, El Peñasco, is a splendor of views by day and a mass of humanity at night. Guaymas shrimp baked in garlic, a reasonably exact facsimile of French onion soup, prime ribs from Chihuahua (the state, not the dog), and an open-faced sandwich piled with ham, avocado, bacon, chicken, and sliced egg under a tarpaulin of Thousand Island dressing are among the attractions.

That brings me, albeit after some meandering among the lesser known purlieus, to Las Hadas, a $30 million creation that resembles a fanciful Moroccan dream or a village in Andalusia, depending upon one's frame of reference. It is also a rich man's fantasy, the creation of Antenor Patiño, the Bolivian miner who is now in his eightieth year. He is presently married to the Countess Beatriz de Rivera, who pays state visits to the premises upon occasion, favoring the management with her own suggestions. Although Las Hadas opened for paying guests in January 1973, it was officially inaugurated by the Patiños and a band of international grandees a year ago, a bash of enormous proportions from which it seems slowly to be recovering.

In any case, 132 rooms are at last ready, with another 72 to be brought to completion upon the word of Patiño and his council of ministers. A dazzling confection of white towers, marble halls, leering gargoyles, a plaza that would befit a modest Italian village, and a spattering of restaurants, Las Hadas lives in a Himalayan fantasy of its own making. Some of the lodgers, down on package tours or convention groups, are not quite as *grande classe* as the surroundings. Assorted as the clientele may be, they assemble for breakfast at Las Piñas, nibble on hamburgers and hot dogs around the pool at lunch, and are often dressed to the nines for dinner at El Terral, where they are shunted to the cocktail lounge to choose among the international creations before being allowed to the table. A young chef imported by the Patiños from Paris, where they live, creates flaming spectacles at tableside. The chef de cuisine and the maître d'hôtel, both of whom perform with expertise, are from the home country.

Aside from its rooms, which rent from $52 a day for two without meals to $120 a day for a master suite (meals extra), Las Hadas is offering 300 lots from $10,000 and up, on which it will construct a two-bedroom house for $40,000. It will develop 120 acres for condominiums, hotels, or even a private vacation complex for large companies paternal enough to build a rest center for employees. Among the side benefits is the use of the marina, for those who drive up in their own yachts, or the golf course. The first nine holes, done by the brothers Dye, are now being played. The back nine will be finished by the

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resort itself. Golf architects are expensive and things are tough, even for tin merchants. Green fees are modest enough at four dollars a day. Figure another four dollars for caddies. There are only three carts; so be prepared to walk. The tennis courts, nearby, are a bit scruffy.

Doubtless, the most economical repose of all is currently enjoyed by the inhabitants of the trailer park that Las Hadas also operates at the sandy edge of the Beach of Audiencia. The camping fee is $2.80 a day, an arrangement that brings the trailer people from Florida, Texas, California, and the northwest. Many trailer travelers bring their own outboard motorboats and spend the days fishing or lolling on the quarter-mile-long beach where Cortez once conferred in audience with his captains to discuss a proposed expedition to the Philippines.

Planners and architects who have scouted the coast estimate that there are 100 beaches in the 100-odd-mile stretch from Manzanillo halfway to Puerto Vallarta. One is occupied by the new Tenacatita Hotel on the bay of the same tongue-twisting name. It has 120 rooms available for a modest $16 a day, but there were few takers the day I stopped by, and the place looked in limbo, somewhere between unfinished and decay.

On the other hand, the newest Club Méditerranée, up the line at Playa Blanca, is already in high working order, plying an international collection of members with extravagant luncheon buffets—French, Mexican, or you-name-it, and multi-coursed dinners served family style, eight to a table. The *gentils membres*, as the customers are so quaintly called, live in upholstered pueblos, which rise on either side of the bay. All the rooms have private baths, and the ones on the upper levels offer a splendid view of the island-dotted bay as well as the exercise afforded by a climb up the side of Anapurna every time you set forth to your room. But no one spends much time in a room at Club Med. The pool is big and heated, a fleet of boats await snorkelers, scuba divers, and picnickers, and the jocks of Gaul assemble every afternoon to whoop it up on the volleyball court. There are enough tennis courts to accommodate Wimbledon in June, and enough Ping-Pong tables to satisfy a posse of touring Chinese diplomats. If anyone needs a rest from all that frenzy of locomotion, classical arias are played on an escarpment above the sea every afternoon at twilight. The bar becomes a happy madhouse after that, with the *gentils membres* moving, after dinner, to the theater.

As if all these facilities and amusements were not endearing enough, prospective *gentils membres*, as well as current ones, may be interested to know that Club Méditerranée has made the Arab blacklist. Assumedly, this means that Arabs are not to patronize the six Club Med playlands (with 4,000 beds) in Morocco, the three in Tunisia, and the one in Cairo. Or, when it is built, the new one in Aqaba, for which the papers were signed in Amman early in March.

THE CLUB'S PLAYA BLANCA OASIS is part of a larger Costa de Careyes project, which encompasses a 250-acre tract of lagoons, hills, and five miles of beaches, all of which has been divided in 32 areas. Some will be sold for condominium and hotel development, but others will be sold as *ranchitos*, small ranches, especially appealing to Americans, so the planners say, which will be delivered complete with cattle. The *ranchito* owners can raise cattle and grow vegetables for the surrounding hotels.

In June the developers will open the village of Careyitos, a beachside settlement with a 26-room hotel and half a hundred condominium apartments which, in the owners' absence, will be rented as additional hotel rooms. Hotel guests and apartment owners, like the *gentils membres* of the neighboring Club, will use the international airport at Puerto Vallarta, 90 miles to the north. From there Air France has a regular service, as well as a Club charter flight, direct to New York. Aeromexico and Mexicana come down from the West Coast, and Aeromexico flies in direct from Houston.

Once snug in the harbor, however, the playa people will encounter no buzz of planes, no flicker of television, and, for that matter, no jangle of telephones. Next door to Playa Blanca, Playa Rosa is a somnolent fishing club. Careyitos is next to that. Water skiing is forbidden in the cove, and so is spear fishing. The shrimp boats still come during the daylight hours, nesting among the small islands so that the crews can take a quiet siesta, perhaps turning the glass toward the Club Med to assess monokinied girls on Playa Blanca. That can be a restorative experience, too, especially if you've spent the whole night looking at shrimp. □

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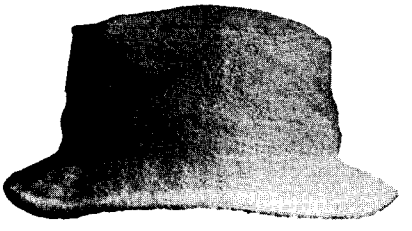

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Double-Crostic No. 71

by Thomas H. Middleton

1 M	2 V	3 B		4 C	5 V	6 R		7 D	8 I		9 Z¹	10 E	11 H	12 D	13 A		14 F	15 Q
16 S	17 Z¹	18 T		19 R	20 C	21 J	22 D	23 F	24 U		25 F	26 U	27 W		28 S	29 P	30 H	31 U
	32 Z	33 M	34 G	35 N		36 F	37 U		38 A	39 U	40 Y	41 F	42 Z	43 P	44 V		45 H	46 P
47 B	48 G	49 I	50 Y	51 J	52 Q	53 M		54 W	55 L	56 A	57 U	58 H		59 K	60 Z¹	61 F	62 T	63 G
64 I	65 Z		66 N	67 U		68 C	69 F	70 Y	71 D		72 E	73 Z	74 O	75 K		76 O	77 W	
78 G	79 I	80 D	81 Y	82 L	83 K	84 H		85 C	86 E	87 W		88 R	89 I	90 U	91 L	92 G		93 A
94 K	95 J	96 O	97 Q	98 G	99 Y	100 N		101 Q	102 I	103 Z¹		104 S	105 J	106 P	107 O		108 I	109 Q
110 M	111 S	112 R	113 G	114 P	115 L	116 V	117 K		118 J	119 A	120 S	121 Z	122 D	123 N	124 I	125 C		126 U
127 P	128 R	129 B		130 J	131 Y	132 M	133 N	134 C	135 P	136 I		137 K	138 Q	139 V	140 R	141 B	142 M	
143 S	144 T		145 V		146 H	147 L	148 I	149 A	150 U		151 S	152 N	153 W	154 D	155 B		156 H	157 Z
158 O		159 U	160 B	161 R	162 K	163 H	164 C	165 Z		166 T	167 B		168 F	169 L	170 X		171 X	
172 P	173 E	174 Z¹		175 Z	176 G		177 A	178 T	179 F	180 B		181 G	182 D	183 X		184 J	185 Y	186 B
187 L	188 N	189 S	190 P	191 E	192 O		193 H	194 C	195 K	196 W		197 V	198 B		199 J	200 X	201 L	
202 C	203 G	204 X	205 P		206 B	207 T		208 M	209 Z¹		210 V	211 M	212 L	213 Q	214 W	215 N	216 C	217 S
218 K	219 Z		220 B	221 D	222 C	223 L	224 T	225 E	226 U	227 M	228 R	229 V						

INSTRUCTIONS

If you've never solved one of these puzzles, it will probably look much more difficult than it actually is. If you can answer only a very few of the WORDS correctly, you're on your way to solving the puzzle.

Fill in the numbered blanks of all the WORDS you can guess, and write the letter of each numbered blank in its correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. The letters printed in the upper-right-hand corners of the squares indicate from what WORD a particular square's letter comes.

The diagram, when filled in, should read as a quotation from a published work. The dark squares are the spaces between words. If there is no dark square at the end of a line, a word may carry over to the line below.

The first letter of each WORD, reading down, will spell the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

You should find yourself seeing words and phrases taking form in the diagram; so you can work back and forth, from WORDS to diagram and from diagram to WORDS, until the diagram is filled in.

CLUES	WORDS
A. "April, April, / Laugh thy _____ laughter" (Sir William Watson, "April")	13 38 56 93 119 149 177
B. Red wine from Burgundy (comp.)	180 206 155 160 198 220 3 47 129 141 167 186
C. Presaging total destruction	194 202 216 222 4 20 125 68 85 134 164
D. Worthless, trifling (comp.)	221 7 22 80 122 154 182 12 71
E. "Leave her to heaven,/ And to those _____ that in her bosom lodge" *(Hamlet)*	72 86 173 191 225 10
F. Spend or pass (2 wds.)	14 25 36 41 61 69 168 179 23
G. Uproar, tumult	92 203 34 48 63 78 98 113 176 181
H. Babyish, childish	11 30 146 156 163 193 45 58 84
I. Sir Richard Steele's first comedy (2 wds.)	108 136 148 8 49 64 79 89 102 124
J. Interlaced	130 184 199 21 51 95 105 118
K. Slid skillfully over snow or ice in descending a mountain	137 195 59 75 83 94 117 162 218
L. Shocking, appalling	223 55 115 147 169 187 201 212 82 91
M. Total, combined	110 132 142 211 227 53 208 1 33
N. Vibrated, quivered	123 188 215 66 133 35 100 152
O. Short railroad track, usually opening onto a main track at both ends	192 76 158 74 107 96
P. Last president of the Texas republic (full name)	114 127 205 29 43 172 190 46 106 135
Q. Foster, keep alive	52 15 97 109 138 213 101
R. Absent-minded	161 88 112 128 228 19 140 6
S. Nitwit, numskull	189 143 16 28 104 120 217 151 111
T. More robust	62 224 18 144 166 178 207
U. 1921 O'Neill play (2 wds.)	26 37 67 57 159 150 39 90 24 226 126 31
V. Submerge rapidly and at a steep angle (as a submarine)	210 5 145 229 2 44 197 139 116
W. Malay daggers	196 54 153 27 77 87 214
X. Hasty, impetuous	204 183 171 170 200
Y. Infuriated	40 131 70 81 99 185 50
Z. Wrapped up closely or fully	121 157 219 32 42 175 73 165 65
Z¹. Strongly built	103 209 9 60 17 174

Answer to *Double-Crostic No. 70* appears on page 58.

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Light Refractions

by Thomas H. Middleton

Learned Length and Thundering Sound

Dr. Lois DeBakey, professor of scientific communications at Baylor College of Medicine, wrote me a few months ago and enclosed several articles on the sort of work she's doing. She's trying to teach doctors to speak, and particularly to write, English. I wish her great success. She's bucking a very powerful tide, because, as she knows, not just doctors, but possibly the majority of successful Americans—those in positions of responsibility and power—speak and write abominably. I don't mean ungrammatically, but abominably. The businessman who writes, "Kindly be advised that, pursuant to our agreement of the 4th inst., we are shipping . . .," and the expert in social adjustment who writes, "It is the sense of this department that, in consequence of the proclivity of the subject to withdraw from prolonged social and interpersonal contact, subject should be accorded a maximization of supportive . . .," are both engaged, not in clear communication, but, at least in part, in mindless bombast.

The trouble is that those who write that way don't seem to be aware that so much of it is drivel. It has become the language of the trade, so to speak. Possibly a social-adjustment expert who wrote good, clear English would be considered a lightweight by his confreres, and the businessman who left out "Kindly be advised that, pursuant to our agreement of the 4th inst.," and said simply, "We are shipping . . .," would be thought a bit slippery.

Most fields have their own jargon, I suppose—idioms that are understood by few outside the field. Cowboys, pharmacists, astronauts, and bindle stiffs all have their own special terms among the tools of their trade. Generally, these terms are useful. Like a kind of shorthand, they help in communication among members of the same field.

But some fields—especially some of the most respected and well paid—have complex jargons that appear designed less to communicate than to impress.

High-flown, arcane language was once a hallmark of lawyers. An occasional teacher, clergyman, or doctor might develop a degree of periphrastic skill, but lawyers were the ones with the big reputations. Any lawyer who couldn't draw up a contract no layman could understand wasn't much of a lawyer. Now, almost anyone with a half-baked education can and probably will get into the act.

Bureaucrats are probably today's most notorious practitioners of the periphrastic arts. The best work on the subject of bureaucratese has been done by Dr. James H. Boren, founder, president, and chairman of the board of the National Association of Professional Bureaucrats and author of *When in Doubt, Mumble* (Van Nostrand, Reinhold Co.). Dr. Boren says, "By applying the techniques of orbital dialoguing and giving free rein to policy formulation by subliminal thought processes, the professional bureaucrat can foster the mumbling artistry of the adjustive *status quo*." The *probu* (Boren's word for professional bureaucrat) avoids saying anything he might have to defend later on by learning "to use the qualifying abstractions that spell the difference between routine presentations and neutral masterpieces."

Bureaucratese is to a large extent a manner of speaking designed for expressing as few ideas as possible in as many words as possible in order to give the appearance of dynamic forward thrust while at the same time not rocking the boat.

Dr. DeBakey's doctors haven't the same motivation for speaking badly, by and large. But, as she says, "Physicians . . . usually favor *cholelithiasis* over *gallstones, pyrexia* over *fever, deglutition* over *swallowing*. . . . A patient will probably react differently if told he must be treated for *cephalalgia* than if informed that he will be given something to relieve his *headache*. (He may, however, be unwilling to pay a large fee for medication for the simple headache.)"

Here the implication is that a professional man's services are worth more if they're wrapped in $20 words. I think there's a lot of truth in that. Most people *are* impressed by big words.

The unfortunate consequence is that many a reputation for wisdom has been gained by their use, and many a faulty argument has slipped past our critical guards because we were too buffaloed to ask, "What's that there word mean?"

Oliver Goldsmith, in describing the schoolmaster in *The Deserted Village*, wrote:

> While words of learned length, and thundering sound,
> Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
> And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
> That one small head could carry all he knew.

You can bet that not one of the gazing rustics ever asked for a translation into the good English Dr. DeBakey and the rest of us would appreciate. □

"You can even name your own quid pro quo."

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Diversions

by Leo Rosten

The True Glories of the Press

"Newspapers always excite curiosity," Charles Lamb wrote. "No one ever lays one down without a feeling of disappointment."

No one? I almost *never* put a paper down with a feeling of disappointment. I love newspapers. I read them with delight—even with passion. To me, a newspaper is a gorgeous daily "bazaar of wonders and follies, a forum, a college, a freak show, a stage."

The best stories on earth parade through the columns of newsprint: stories with plots beyond what any writer in his senses would dare to contrive and with characters only God, in his infinite variety and amusement, could possibly concoct. Where but from the kooky carnival of life could one possibly find a woman such as the one in Memphis who entered an elevator and, en route to Room 1263, proceeded to push buttons 12, 6, and 3?

Or a character such as the European composer who so hated the "illogical" American custom of writing an address by placing the number before the street name (a point I wholeheartedly agree with) that whenever he was in New York and took a cab, he would maliciously instruct the driver, "Go to number 46."

"Number 46 *what*?"

"Don't worry," the composer evilly grinned. "Just go to number 46, and I'll tell you the name of the street when we get there."

Or the young lady, reported by Norton Mockridge, who filled out her application form for Blue Cross this way:

> Date of Birth: Jan. 12, 1940
> Weight: 6 pounds, 10 ounces
> Height: 20 inches

All of these are culled from my chortling excursions through the press. You think them unusual? Then ponder this dispatch from UPI:

In Kirby Misperton, England, zoo officials paid out more than $280 to visitors last year for articles stolen from them by monkeys.

The monkeys specialize in snatching eyeglasses from the wearers' noses when visitors bend forward to make out a sign on the cage which reads: "WARNING—THESE MONKEYS SNATCH GLASSES."

Did you know that mosquitoes prefer to bite men in the prime of their (the men's) life? *Regardez* a space-filler from London:

Mosquitoes prefer men, according to British doctors. They like them in their youthful prime and are less attracted to women, children and aging men, according to a report in the London Clinic Medical Journal.

And from tormented Greece, not long ago, I read a dispatch that contained this joke, making the rounds of Athens:

At a meeting between the Greek Premier and the Chinese Communist leader, Mao Tse-tung, the latter asks how many people there are in Greece.

"Eight million," the Premier replies.

"Really," says Chairman Mao. "And what hotel are they staying at?"

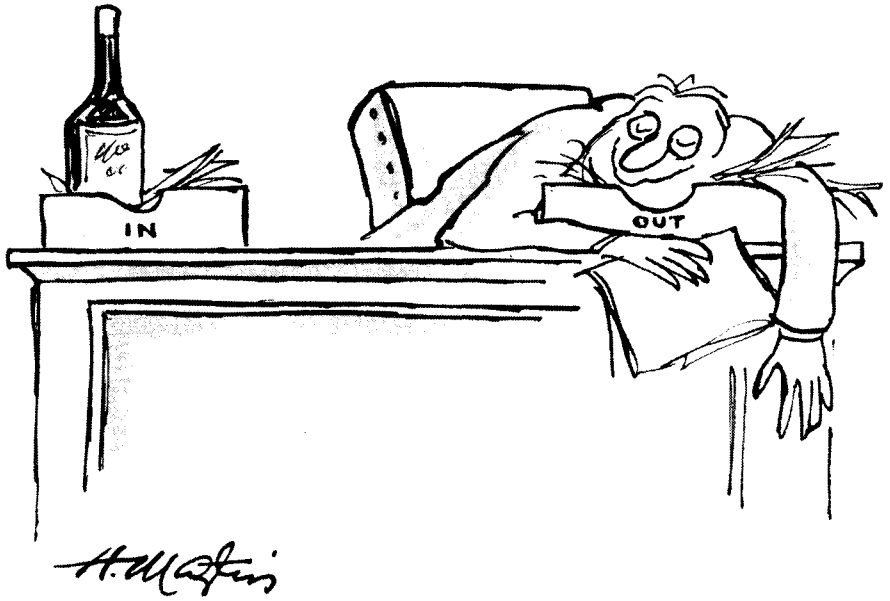
Some news items, of course, can drive you up the wall—because they have been garbled by typesetters or emasculated by copy editors or amputated unto pointlessness by robots who are concerned only with making lines fit available space without bothering to read the remnants they cut out.

In a Hong Kong paper, I once found the revelation that Romanians observe this startling custom: Every June 8 they tie the front paws of dogs to a trapeze and swing the trapeze (and the dogs) back and forth.

That was the whole news item. I don't know whether Romanians still do this, and I can't figure out why they once did this. I sometimes bolt up in bed, shouting: "What makes Romanians tie dogs to a trapeze and swing them back and forth?"

I suppose the custom goes back to a historic day when the dogs failed to bark at invaders, as the dogs of ancient Rome failed to do in 390 B.C.: It was the geese which quacked frantic warning that the besieging Gauls were making a stealthy night attack up the Capitoline Hill.

Should some Romanian maven chance to read these lines, please resolve my canine consternation. □



ANSWER TO MIDDLETON DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 70

P(ETER) D. BUNZEL:
LAST CALL FOR ANAHEIM
(AZUSA AND CUCAMONGA . . .)

The sounds of that program are the sounds of our childhood: the growling bear guarding Benny's vault, his sputtering Maxwell, the train announcer calling out, "Anaheim, Azusa, Cucamonga"—towns that, in later years, many of us were surprised to find were real.
From *The Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 29, 1974

Answer to *Wit Twister* (see page 10): secure, rescue, ceruse.

Answer to *Literary Crypt No. 31* (see page 11): Back of every achievement is a proud wife and a surprised mother-in-law. Brooks Hays

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(**Letters:** *continued from page 6.*)
recall, the United States has been shipping billions of dollars worth of grain, food, fertilizer, tools, farm implements, machinery, and technological help to India—and with what results? . . .

Norman Cousins is appalled at the notion that "some people have the right to decide whether others should live or die." Throughout the pages of history, some people have always had that right and have, most assuredly, exercised it.

He says that "we can't ignore outstretched hands." I agree, but with one very crucial qualification: We *must* ignore all outstretched hands abroad until there are no longer any outstretched hands at home! We *dare* not assume the role of Provider to the World until we have ensured that every last one of our own people has enough to eat, a roof over his head, and clothes on his back.

Charity must begin *at home*!

Harold Plaut
Libertyville, Ill.

Norman Cousins's editorial does injustice to Garrett Hardin's lifeboat ethic by presenting it as a willful decision to allow starvation. Hardin has tried to point out the mathematical impossibility of one nation's supporting the entire world and the hopeless futility of setting this as an ethical goal. . . . Since 1950 India's population has increased by more than the size of the U.S. population—from 350 to nearly 600 million. At that rate, it will reach 1 billion by the year 2000. Yet the Indian government has reduced funds for its perennially feeble birth-control program.

Mr. Cousins writes, ". . . the best way to bring down the birth rate is not to let people starve, but to give them a better life." Is he seriously suggesting that we have the power to give 600 million Indians a "better life"? We can't even solve the infinitely simpler problems (slums, crime, economic depression, energy gluttony) confronting us here at home. Our resources are not infinite; they are finite. No degree of compassion can change that fact.

Resources wasted on problems we *can't* solve are unavailable for problems we *can* solve. That is what Garrett Hardin's lifeboat ethic implies. Regardless of how we feel about the ethical priorities, it is sheer sentimentality to ignore our basic limitations, while granting everyone else his.

C. W. Griffin
Denville, N.J.

(**Music:** *continued from page 44.*)
performed by a New York Salome in decades. She sighed in movement, exuded ardor with a small thrust of the midriff, and lifted a toe as melodically as she intoned a vocal phrase.

She does not, however, have the soaring sound to overarch the orchestra where it was most needed: in the climax of the play that draws the Tetrarch's order: "Kill that woman!" In fulfillment of the production scheme, Miss Niska's prolonged exercise in necrophilia was not restricted to the usual kiss on the lips of the severed head in the salver provided to contain the bloody drippings. She cradled the head in her arms, rolled over and pressed it to her breast, stood upright and rubbed its nose with a bare toe as a form of foot fetish. There was, of course, never a drop of gore from the pasteboard object, which made all of the action as much of a fraud as the impulse on which it was based.

FOR THE REST, the demerits included an ornate setting (in the manner of Gustave Moreau) by Douglas W. Schmidt; caricatures of costuming for Herod and Herodias (huge shawl collars and exaggerated crowns), which made Alan Crofoot and Frances Bible more like figures in a fancy dress ball than the Tetrarch and consort of Judea. The Narraboth was Joseph Blanton, a sweet-voiced tenor lacking the power to get out Strauss's most beautiful phrase in the score ("*Wie schön ist Prinzessin Salome heute abend*"), which sets the tone for all that follows. William Justus's baritone was also undersized for Jokanaan.

The production, to quote the program, was jointly undertaken by "The New York City Opera and the Opera Society of Washington, Inc., mounted with the assistance of a grant by the National Opera Institute." This may explain some of its vocal shortcomings. But nothing can justify a production whose thrust was all to exaggeration, distortion, and caricature, in a pointless attempt to make Strauss's treatment of Wilde's play into a "shocker." As Georg Solti demonstrated not many months ago in a Carnegie Hall concert performance with the Chicago Symphony and Birgit Nilsson, *Salome* is a time bomb with a built-in detonator that requires, merely, the musical heat to activate it. Conductor Julius Rudel did what was possible with a reduced version of Strauss's original scoring, but the stage action resisted any chance of ignition. □

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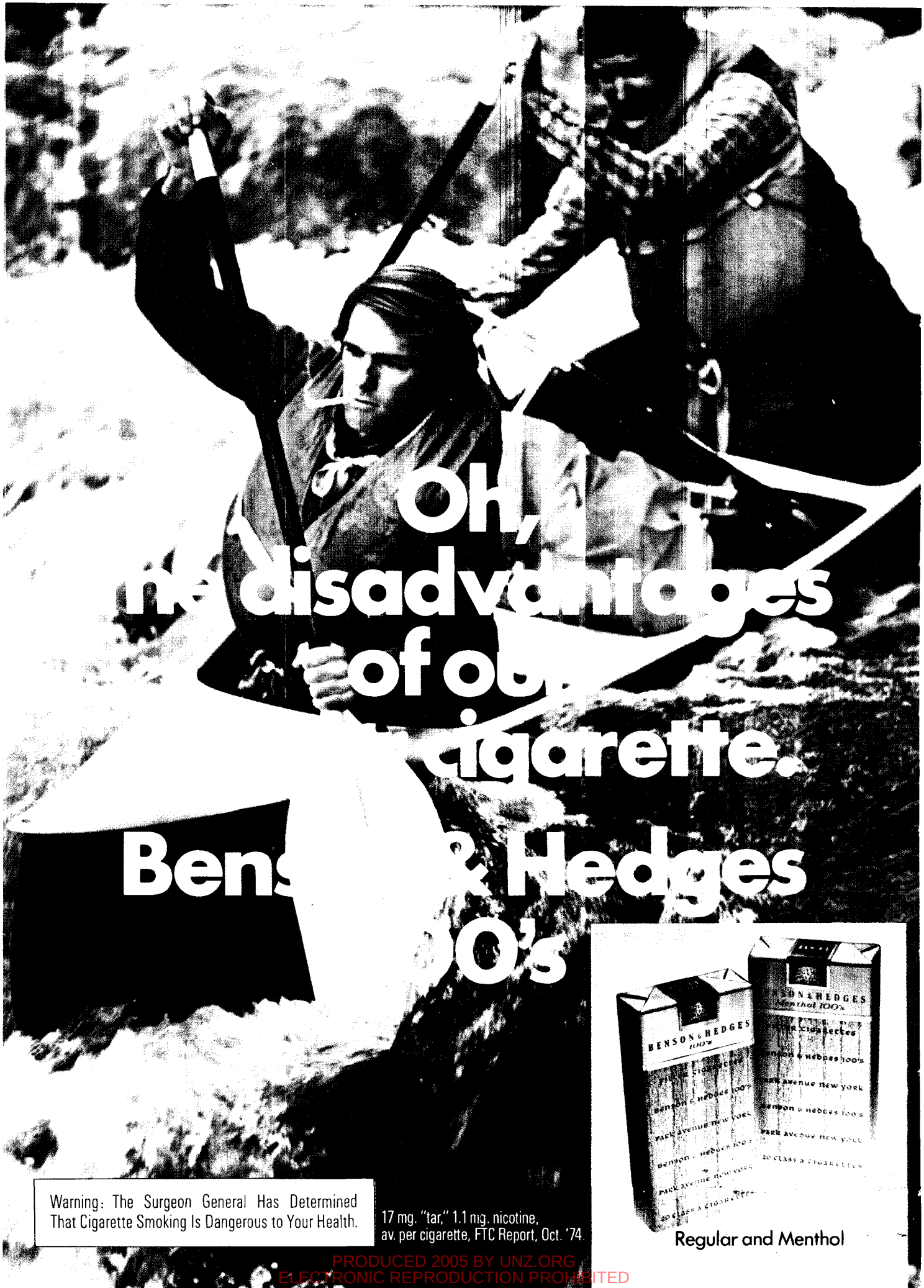

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